



# THE VEDANTA KAUSTUBHA

DR. TRIPTA GUPTA

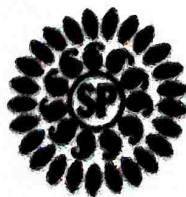
# VEDĀNTA-KAUSTUBHA



# **VEDĀNTA-KAUSTUBHA**

## **—A STUDY**

**Dr. TRIPTA GUPTA**



**SANJAY PRAKASHAN**  
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## DEDICATION

मातृपितृचरणेषु समर्पितम्।

Dedicated to my mother Smt. Shanti Devi and Late father Mr. Mukand Lal Bajaj.

पूज्य माता को,

माँ, एक एहसास मधुर  
आँचल सघन वृक्ष छाया सा  
हर लेता हर संताप मानव का  
एक प्रेरणा, एक शक्ति  
मार्गदर्शिका ध्रुवतारा सी  
झर-झर बहती रसधारा जिसकी  
करती सिञ्चित मन प्राणों को  
माँ नाम की उस परम शक्ति को  
करूँ बार-बार मैं अनेक प्रणाम

—तृप्ता गुप्ता

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My thanks are due to all those scholars, whose works helped me consciously or unconsciously, while proceeding in the research work.

**—Tripta Gupta**



## INTRODUCTION

Philosophy has been considered as the most museful area of quest in India. Among the six systems of Indian philosophy, Vedānta has been the most popular system in India. Among the various schools of Vedānta, the Nimbārka School of Vedānta, has not attracted the attention of a number of scholars, as that of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja or Madhvācārya; consequently, much work has not been done in this field. Besides, the brief treatment of the Nimbārka School in the general books on Indian philosophy, only two or three works are—worth mentioning namely ‘Doctrines of Nimbārka and his Followers’ by Dr. Roma Bose and ‘Nimbārka School of Vedānta’ by Umeśa Miśra. But both deal with Nimbārka’s philosophy in particular and that of his successors in general. None of the works has given due importance to Vedānta-Kaustubha of Śrīnivāsa, the immediate disciple and successor of Nimbārka, and therefore it requires separate treatment, which I have tried to give in the present work ; pointing out clearly its position, merits, demerits etc.

The first chapter deals with the personal life of Śrīnivāsācārya. I have tried to give, whatever, material I obtained about his birth, education and personal life. His date of birth with reference to that of Nimbārka has been fixed on the basis of internal as well as external Pramāṇas. The achievements of Śrīnivāsa in philosophical field have also been dealt with. Vedānta-Kaustubha-Prabhā, the only commentary available on Vedānta-Kaustubha has dealt with in brief.

The second chapter traces the origin of bhedābheda

school. Its origin has been traced right from the R̥gveda itself and the stages of development have been discussed. It is to bring to your notice that the study is incomplete since our opinion is based on the limited amount of literature available there since the missing links could not be located due to the absence of treatises.

The third chapter takes into consideration the philosophy of Śrīnivāsācārya, as contained in Vedānta-Kaustubha. Brahman, Cit and Acit, the three realities, and their mutual relation, leading to nomenclature of system as Svābhāvika-bhedābheda, has been dealt with exhaustively. His concept regarding mokṣa and its sādhanas or means of realization have also been dealt with in Vedānta-Kaustubha. In the Second Part of the chapter, position of Vedānta-Kaustubha in Nimbārka Saṁpradāya, has been assessed.

The fourth chapter deals with the comparative study of philosophy contained in Vedānta-Kaustubha with that of Śaṅkarācārya, Bhāskarācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, and Caitanya as presented by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa.

The concluding chapter is a summary of research work.

—Tripta Gupta

## NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

In the book, the Devanāgarī characters are transliterated according to the scheme adopted by the International Congress of Orientalist at Athens in 1912 and since then generally acknowledged to be the only rational and satisfactory one.

अ	a	द	t
आ	ā	ढ	ṭh
इ	i	ड	ḍ
ई	ī	ढ	ḍh
उ	u	ण	ṇ
ऊ	ū	त	t
ऋ	r̥	थ	th
ॠ	r̄	द	d
ए	e	ध	dh
ओ	o	न	n
ऐ	ai	प	p
औ	au	फ	ph
ः	m̐	ब	b
:	h	भ	bh
क्	k	म्	m
ख	kh	य	y
ग	g	र	r
घ	gh	ल	l
ङ	ṅ	व	v
च	c	श्	ś
छ	ch	ष्	ṣ
ज	j	स्	s
झ	jh	ह	h
ञ	ñ		



## ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.	Ācārya-Carita
B.S.	Brahma- Sūtra
Bh.B.	Bhāskara-Bhāṣya
Brh. Upa.	Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
Chāndogya & Cha. Upa.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
D.S.	Daśa-Ślokī
S.J.	Siddhānta-Jāhnavi
D.S.S.	Dvaitādvaita Siddhānta-Setukā
G.B.	Govinda- Bhāṣya
G.K.	Gauḍapāda-Kārikā
Kaṭha Upa.	Kaṭhopaniṣad
M. V.	Madhva-Vijaya
Muṇḍaka	Muṇḍakopaniṣad
Māṇḍukya	Māṇḍukyopaniṣad
M.B.	Madhva-Bhāṣya
S.B.	Śārīrika-mīmāṃsā-bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya
S.P.	Śruta-Prakāśikā
Śvetāśvetara.	Śvetāśvetara Upaniṣad
S.N.K.S.R.	Saviśeṣa-Nirviśeṣa-Kṛṣṇa-Stava-rāja
Taitt. Upa.	Taittariya Upaniṣad
V.K.	Vedānta-Kaustubha
V.P.S.	Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha
V.K.P.	Vedānta-Kaustubha-Prabhā
V.R.M.	Vedānta-Ratna-Maṅjūṣā
V.K.V.	Vedānta-Kārikā-Valī



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## CHAPTER I

# LIFE OF ŚRĪNIVĀSĀCĀRYA

Śrīnivāsācārya, the writer of Vedānta-Kaustubha was the immediate disciple of Nimbārka-cārya and one of the most prominent ācāryas in Nimbārka Saṁpradāya. At the command of his preceptor, he wrote Vedānta-Kaustubha, which is more than a gloss on the Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya known as Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha of Nimbārka-cārya, this fact is recorded by Śrīnivāsācārya himself—

“.....तदाज्ञया तदुक्तवर्त्मना तदनुग्रहकामेन तच्छिष्येण मया मृदुमितपदो वेदान्तकौस्तुभस्तद्भावार्थप्रकाशको विदुषामुपकाराय विरच्यते।”

At his command, I, his disciple desirous to win his favour, am composing Vedānta-Kaustubha, which is composed of soft and limited words and which express the purport of that (Vedānta Pārijāta Saurabha), which is in accordance with the way or path demonstrated by him, with a desire of obtaining his favour and for benefitting the wise.

Very little is known about the personal life of Śrīnivāsa from his work. Only a little information is obtained from Nimbārka-cārya's Daśaślokī and other references.

Mythologically, he is said to be an incarnation of Śaṅkha or Conch-shell of Viṣṇu (शंखावतारः) as Nimbārka-cārya is also said to be an incarnation of the discus of Viṣṇu (सुदर्शनावतारः).

Śrīnivāsa is said to have appeared on this earth in the hermitage of Nimbārka in the month of Māgha, (January-February) on the fifth day of the bright half of the moon in Vṛndāvana. His father's name was Ācāryapāda and his



mother's Lokamati. The couple is said to be very righteous and well educated. According to a tradition, once Ācāryapāda, who was travelling to conquer the whole world by his scholarship stayed in the āśrama of Nimbārka, but did not accept the meal because dusk had appeared. There upon Nimbārka by his power, caused the setting sun to rest on a Nimba tree, so that his guest might accept food. Ācāryapāda was overwhelmed by the spiritual eminence of Nimbārka and immediately became his disciple and started living in his hermitage ; where Śrīnivāsa was born later on. He is also believed to be a Telugu Brahmin.

Śrīnivāsa received the knowledge of all the scriptures directly from Nimbārka. It is also said that Nimbārka devoted Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha to Śrīnivāsa<sup>2</sup> and wrote (Daśaślokī) for him. Later on, Śrīnivāsa wrote Vedānta-Kaustubha at his command.

Nimbārkācārya, is also said to have composed eight śloka each in praise of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā and by reciting, Śrīnivāsa was able to have direct vision of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīnivāsācārya travelled far and wide in the country and had many promising disciples such as Viśvācārya and so on, who not only furthered the Bhedābheda school of Nimbārka but also defended his school against the attacks of rival schools.

Viśvācārya bows down to Śrīnivāsācārya—

शंखावतारः पुरुषोत्तमस्य यस्य ध्वनिः शास्त्रमचिन्त्यशक्तिः।

यत्स्पर्शमात्राद् ध्रुवम् आप्तकामस्तं श्रीनिवासं शरणं प्रपद्ये॥<sup>3</sup>

Puruṣottamācārya wrote a very comprehensive bhāṣya on Daśaślokī of Nimbārka, therein, also he pays obeisance to Śrīnivāsa as his Guru—

“तं वन्दे मनसा गिरा च शिरसा श्रीश्रीनिवासं गुरुम्।”

**Date of Śrīnivāsa**

About the date of Śrīnivāsa and his works, nothing is

known. He himself is silent on this point also, as in the case of his personal life. But one thing is definite that he, being the direct pupil of Nimbārka-cārya, must be near to the time of Nimbārka. Therefore, to decide the date of Śrīnivāsa, the date of Nimbārka-cārya should be determined first. But the date of Nimbārka is also controversial.

The traditional view point which assigns Nimbārka-cārya to a very ancient period *i.e.* his being contemporary of Vyāsa is not acceptable. Because this view is based merely on the account given in Bhaviṣya-Purāṇa—

सुदर्शनो द्वापरान्ते कृष्णाज्ञप्तो जनिष्यति ।

निम्बादित्य इति ख्यातो धर्मग्लानिं हरिष्यति ।'

The account given, therein, cannot be said as fully historical, since there is no other authoritative historical proof to support the fact ; because the things mentioned in the Purāṇas are not accepted as fully historical. Moreover, the date of the Purāṇa is not definite. It can be a late work also. Therefore, nothing can be established on the basis of this account.

Some scholars hold that Nimbārka-cārya is the oldest commentator of the Brahmasūtras. The arguments given are the following :-

The language of Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha and Vedānta-Kaustubha is very simple, devoid of complicated construction and so on.

Śaṅkarācārya criticizes Bhedābhedavāda,<sup>6</sup> which is Nimbārka's Svābhāvika-Bhedābhedavāda. Nimbārka's Bhedābhedavāda is even anterior to Gauḍapāda as is clear from the fact that Gauḍapāda refers to Bhedābhedavāda in one of his Kārikas—

अद्वैतं परमार्थो हि द्वैतं तदभेद उच्यते ।

तेषामुभयथा द्वैतं तेनायं न विरुध्यते ।'



The arguments given above do not stand on solid grounds, it would be seen presently.

It is accepted, that the language and style of Vedānta-Kaustubha is very simple in comparison to other bhāṣyas of the Brahmasūtras. But mere language and style do not constitute a firm ground in itself, to establish a fact, unless and until, these are supported by some other dependable proof. These linguistic and stylistic peculiarities differ from writer to writer and, therefore, cannot be said as conclusive evidences in themselves.

Nimbārka-cārya does not criticize or allude to any other Vedāntic School in his Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha, but criticizes Śaṅkara in other books.<sup>8</sup> He criticizes Nirguṇa-vāda, Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi-vāda *etc.* doctrines of Śaṅkara.<sup>9</sup> From this, one fact is established that Nimbārka was not a predecessor of Śaṅkara.

Gauḍapāda's Kārikā does not refer to Bhedābheda but to the Bheda or Dvaita School, it is supported by the context also. Since in the preceding Kārikas the allusion is to the Dvaita School, which is being continued here also.<sup>10</sup>

The refutation of Bhedābheda by Śaṅkara is that of the schools existing even earlier than Śaṅkara, some of which are even recorded by Bādarāyaṇa,<sup>11</sup> in the Brahmasūtras. The Bhedābheda Schools existed even prior to the Brahmasūtras and among those, the Svābhāvika Bhedābheda of Nimbārka has been alluded, it cannot be held with certainty ; because Bādarāyaṇa does not mention Nimbārka, along with Āśmarathya, Auḍulomin and Kāśakṛtsna, whose names and doctrines are referred to as propounding Bhedābheda-vāda.

From this discussion one thing is established that Nimbārka is posterior to Bādarāyaṇa and Śaṅkarācārya. As he criticizes Śaṅkara in his book, it means Śaṅkara's doctrine

was fairly prevalent by his time. Nimbārka is even later than Bhāskarācārya propounder of Aupādhika Bhedābheda. Firstly because the need of justification of co-existence of Bheda i.e. difference and Abheda i.e. non-difference exists for Bhāskarācārya<sup>12</sup> and not for Nimbārka. It indicates the fact that all of the prior commentaries propounding Bhedābheda have become extinct by his time and therefore Bhāskarācārya deemed it necessary to justify the co-existence of Bheda and Abheda, first of all and then he proceeded to expound his philosophical concepts, while Nimbārka does not feel this need.

Secondly Bhāskarācārya is nearer to Śaṅkarācārya than Nimbārka, it is evident from the effect of the philosophy of Śaṅkara on the philosophy of Bhāskara. In spite of Bhāskara's refutation of doctrines of Śaṅkara, such as that of Avidyā<sup>13</sup> and considering the world as 'mithyā' and so on still he is under the effect of Śaṅkara's powerful philosophical doctrines unconsciously.

Bhāskara regards the presence of Bhedābheda relation in the bound state only. He holds like Śaṅkara that Jīva is united with Brahman in the released state<sup>14</sup>. Bhāskara, like Śaṅkara, holds that it is due to the upādhis<sup>15</sup> that the individual soul considers itself as different from Brahman, and the removal of upādhis leads it to realize its nature, as identical with Brahman, although the upādhis are also regarded as real. Similarly the atomic size of the individual self is regarded as 'aupādhika' and 'vibhūṭva' is regarded its real nature.

Some scholars hold<sup>16</sup> that Nimbārka was posterior to Madhvācārya on the following grounds—

His name is not mentioned among the twenty one commentators conquered by Madhvācārya,<sup>17</sup> whose names are the following :



Bhārativijay, Saccidānanda, Brahmagoṣha, Śatānanda, Udavarta, Vijaya, Rudrabhatta, Vāmana, Yādava-Prakāśa, Piśāca, Vṛttikāra, Vijayabhatta, Viṣṇukrānta, Vaḍindra Mādhvadāsa, Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānuja, Bhartṛprapañca, Dramiḍa, Brahmadatta, Bhāskara and therefore it follows from above that Nimbārka was posterior to Madhvācārya.

Secondly Nimbārka's philosophy is not recorded in *Ṣaḍdarśana-Saṁgraha* of Mādhvācārya written in the 14th Century, it means Nimbārka had not flourished by that time.

Thirdly there is a manuscript called *Madhva-mukha-mardana* which is said to be written by Nimbārka. The manuscript is being preserved by the followers of Madhva and is not made available to anyone. It clearly indicates that Nimbārka came after Mādhvācārya.

Fourthly as Nimbārka himself refers to three Vaiṣṇava Saṁpradāyas i.e. the Śrī, Brahma and Sanaka ; the Brahma Saṁpradāya is the name of Madhvācārya's school, therefore it means Nimbārka was posterior to him.

But these arguments can be refuted easily, as will be seen presently.

As far as the first argument is concerned, that as Nimbārka is not referred to by Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍitācārya, therefore he had not appeared by that time, it may be said that it is possible that the majority of names recorded by Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍitācārya were traditional and unreal, because their identity is not known to us. Secondly it is also possible that Nimbārka, who flourished in Vṛndāvana situated in the north of India, might not have been so popular by the time of Madhvācārya, who flourished in the south and that is why his supersession is not recorded.

The argument that Nimbārka's doctrine is not recorded in *Ṣaḍ-Darśana-Saṁgraha* and so he was non-existent, by



that time does not have much force. The non-reference to a thing does not necessarily indicate its non-existence. Moreover, Mādhvācārya does not allude to any of the former Bhedābheda School as that of Bhāskara *etc.* should it be contended, then that Bhāskara had also not existed by that time?

The manuscript named Madhva-mukha-mardana, when it is not lent to any body, as is said, by the scholars<sup>18</sup> themselves, how it may be believed that it is really written by Nimbārka or not ? It can be a hearsay also. Moreover, one cannot understand the fact, why a book which refutes one's own school or system would be preserved by that very school!

The reference to Śrī, Brahma and Sanaka Saṁpradāyas by Nimbārka, (which I am unable to find in his works,) can be also on the basis of a verse found in Padma Purāṇa-“Those mantras which belong to no sects are not effective and therefore in the Kali age, there shall be the followers of four sects of Śrī, Brahma, Rudra and Sanaka. They shall be the Vaiṣṇavas purifying the world.”<sup>19</sup>

R.G. Bhandarkar<sup>20</sup> has placed Nimbārka in the beginning of 12<sup>th</sup> Century, just after Rāmānuja-“In my Report on the search for Sanskrit Manuscripts for the year 1882-83, I have given two succession lists of spiritual teachers, one of the sect of Ānandatīrtha and another of that founded by Nimbārka. This contains 37 names, there is another list in manuscript 709 of the collection of 1884-7, which contains 45 names. The two lists agree upto No. 32, Harivyāsadeva.

After that, while the first has only five names, the second has thirteen names, and none of these agrees with any of the five, so that after Harivyāsadeva, the line appears to have divided itself into two branches. No. 709 of the same collection was written in Saṁvat 1806 Corresponding to 1750 A.D., when Goswāmin Dāmodara was living. He was thirty-



third after Ānandatīrtha died in 1879 A.D. Ānandatīrtha according to our revised date died in 1276 A.D., so that his thirty-three successors occupied 603 years. Supposing that the thirty three successors of Nimbārka occupied about the same period and allowing about fifteen years of life to Dāmodara Goswāmin, who was living in 1760 A.D. and subtracting from 1765 A.D., 603 years, we have 1162, which is about the date of Nimbārka's death, so that he lived after Rāmānuja."

I agree with R.G. Bhandarkar fully. Nimbārka's philosophy flourished just after Rāmānuja, this fact can be proved on some additional grounds too.

Firstly Nimbārka's philosophical concept bears similarity to that of Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja regards Cit and Acit as constituting the very body of Brahman or Viṣṇu. While Nimbārka considers Cit and Acit as powers of Brahman and this concept of relation of power and powerful (शक्तिः & शक्तिमान्) between Brahman and Cit and Acit, seems to be an improvement over the शरीरशरीरी भावसम्बन्धः propounded by Rāmānuja. The concept conveyed by शक्तिः & शक्तिमद्भावसम्बन्धः of Nimbārka and शरीरशरीरीभावसम्बन्धः of Rāmānuja is almost same. Bhakti, which was emphasized by Rāmānuja, was also dealt with in details by Nimbārka and his followers, and expounded fully.

Nimbārka seems to follow Rāmānuja even in following the Vaiṣṇavite cults. Similarly he gives preference to Prapatti-Vāda or doctrine of self-Surrender.<sup>21</sup>

The Vyūhas and Avatāras<sup>22</sup> mentioned by him, are common to Rāmānuja. The doctrines of Nimbārka are near to the southern branch of Rāmānuja school, who also believes in Prapattivāda and agrees to the instance of cat and its Kittens (मार्जारन्यायः). The only difference between Nimbārka and

Rāmānuja being that the former takes Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa for meditation, while the latter takes Nārāyaṇa and Lakṣmi which can be explained due to the difference of countries in which they flourished. Nimbārka flourished in Vṛndāvana where Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult was more prominent.

Therefore in the light of the above discussion, it is held that Nimbārkaācārya flourished in the twelfth century after Rāmānuja and before Madhvācārya. Śrīnivāsācārya, as is contended, being the immediate disciple of Nimbārka, must have flourished from the latter part of twelfth century to the beginning of thirteenth century.

### **Works**

The monumental work of Śrīnivāsācārya is Vedānta Kaustubha, which he wrote for elucidating Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha, the commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras written by Nimbārkaācārya.

Besides this, he is said to have written Laghu-Stavarāja-Stotram, Stava-Pañcaka-Māhātmya and Vedānta-Kārikāvalī.<sup>23</sup>

But in some books we also find reference to some other books attributed to him ; such as Khyāti-nirṇaya,<sup>24</sup> Rahasya-Prabandha and Kaṭhopaniṣadbhāṣya. The books are not available and much cannot be said about their authorship or content etc.

Laghu-stavarāj-stotram is not a philosophical work, as is evident from the name itself. It is a small treatise composed in eulogy. Khyāti-Nirṇaya deals with philosophical concepts of Nimbārka's School is evident from the reference by Sundarabhatta, as he alludes to it to look for an explanation of a philosophical concept, which is well-expounded there. Vedānta-Kārikāvalī has also been ascribed to Śrīnivāsācārya.<sup>25</sup> As we go through the work for the examination of the above fact we find two references to Śrīnivāsa in the commentary AdhyātmaSudhātaraṅginī of Purusottama Prasāda Vaiṣṇava II—



“श्रीनिवासानुग्रहैककामेन मया क्रियते।”<sup>126</sup>

and “प्रसीदतां हयग्रीवः श्रीनिवासो जगद्गुरुः।”<sup>127</sup>

No other direct statement, stating him as the author has come down to us. Besides this the language is also very simple like that of Vedānta-Kaustubha. And it is quite possible that the treatise was composed by Śrīnivāsa following the example of his guru, who composed other treatises for refutation (Daśaślokī & S.N.K.S.R.) of other Schools and for putting an equally detailed emphasis on the sādhyā as well as sādhana part of his philosophy. But this still remains a surmise, and nothing can be said finally unless some stronger and conclusive ground be found for support.

### Commentary

Vedānta-Kaustubha-Prabhā written by Keśava Kāśmīrī Bhatta is the only commentary on Vedānta-Kaustubha. The writer himself says :

तदपि श्रीशंखावतारः श्रीश्रीनिवासाचार्यो वेदान्तकौस्तुभभाष्यरूपेण विशदयामास, तत्र सौकर्येण प्रवेशाय मिताक्षरा वेदान्तकौस्तुभप्रभाष्या सूत्रवृत्तिर्मया संगृह्यते।”<sup>128</sup>

Moreover the title itself indicates the above fact. Keśava Kāśmīrī is said to have flourished at the end of 14th century or at the beginning of the 15th century. He is one of the prominent scholars of Nimbārka school.

His language and style is not simple like that of Śrīnivāsa. It is written in an elaborate style. It not only elucidates the commentary of Śrīnivāsa but also criticizes in detail the doctrine of rival schools, such as vivartavāda, nirviśeṣavāda, jīvanmukti<sup>29</sup> etc.

In spite of accepting the details given by Śrīnivāsācārya, he does not forget in pointing out his original ideas here<sup>30</sup> and there and elaborate explanations are provided, wherever

necessary. Almost everything is taken up and explained by him.

Undoubtedly his commentary occupies a significant place in Nimbārka Saṁpradāya and is a befitting commentary on Vedānta-Kaustubha.

### **Language and Style of Vedānta-Kaustubha**

Vedānta-Kaustubha is written in a very simple and lucid style. It is written in prose, which is interknitted by similes, allusions, rūpakas, illustrations and quotations.

His language is purely befitting for a bhāṣya, especially for a bhāṣya written on a philosophical treatise. The language of a bhāṣya, intended to explain the technical terms and metaphysical concepts should be very clear and free of ambiguity altogether. Otherwise, the reader entangled in the wordly jugglery would not be able to comprehend the deep import of the work.

This criterion at its best can be applicable to Vedānta-Kaustubha. Its language goes a long way in assisting the reader to grasp the underlying ideas well. There are no complicacies in the language. Any sūtra may be taken up and studied as an illustration of above statement. Though later, its language is simpler even than those of its predecessors Śaṁkarācārya and Rāmānujācārya.

The author seems to have full command over Saṁskrit language and it is free of grammatical flaws.

His language is fluent. No where it seems to be either unnatural or superficially thrust in.

On the hand the style is not conversational like that of Śaṁkarācārya's bhāṣya, but on the other hand it is written in a descriptive manner.

He tries to explain each and every word of the Sūtra as



clearly as possible with the help of a number of examples and illustrations.

Like other bhāṣyas he puts forth first of all the Pūrva-pakṣa in all details, refutes it, and then presents his Siddhānta or doctrine and establishes it fully.

Like Nimbārka-cārya, he does not criticize any of the rival Vedāntic School in his bhāṣya and engages himself only in the business of elucidation. That is why, Vedānta-Kaustubha is especially beneficial for a person, who is going to study Nimbārka's Svābhāvika Bhedābheda for the first time.

As Sanskr̥ta language had already become the language of paṇḍits and scholarly works since a long time, there seems to be no change in language since changes can come in a spoken language only. Therefore Saṅskṛta language of Śrīnivāsa also does not depict any sign of change and development. Same linguistic usages are seen every where. Only stylistic differences are there.

There is no notable linguistic peculiarity in Vedānta-Kaustubha. At some places there appears to be frequent use of particles and verbal forms are also not infrequent. The usage of verbal forms and particles etc. is just in consonance with the rules of classical grammar written by Pāṇinī.

## REFERENCES

1. V.K. 1.1.1. p. 2.
2. Ā.C. p. 87 and p.120. As quoted by Dr. Rama Bose in Doctrines of Nimbārka & His Followers, Vol. III, p. 8. In Daśaśloki itself, we get, however, no reference to this fact.
3. As quoted by Puruṣottama in V.R.M., p. 3.
4. V.R.M., p.1.
5. Quoted in the introduction of V.P.S. & V.K.
6. Ś.B. 2.1.14, p. 465
7. G.K. 3. 18, p. 167.
8. Saviśeṣa-Nirviśeṣa-Kṛṣṇa-Stava-Rāja.
9. Ibid. V 2, 21, 22-23.

10. G.K. 3.18, p. 167.
11. B.S. 1.4. 19-22.
12. Bh.B. 1.1.4., p. 17 onwards.
13. Bh.B. 1.1.4., p. 19 etc.
14. Ibid. 1.4.21, p. 84.
15. Ibid. 2.3.18-43, p. 135-141.
16. Dr. Roma Bose etc.
17. M. V. by Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍitācārya
18. Dr. Roma Bose, and Mr. Das-Gupta etc. in "Doctrines of Nimbārka & His Followers" and "Indian Philosophy" respectively.
19. Mantra quoted by Swāmī B. V. Tīrtha in "Sri Chaitanya's Concept of Theistic Vedānta", p. 158.
20. Vaisnavism, Savism and Other Minor Religious Systems, p. 62.
21. Daśaśloki, 8th verse.
22. Daśaśloki, V.4.
23. Ref. to by Dr. Roma Bose in Doctrines of Nimbārka & His Followers, Vol. III, p. 68.
24. It is referred by Sundarabhatta in Siddhānta Setukā  
"ख्यातिनिणये व्याख्यातं चैतच्छ्रीनिवासाचार्यचरणैः" p. 161. as being written by Śrīnivāsa.
25. Ref. to by Dr. Roma Bose in Doctrines of Nimbārka & His Followers, Vol. III, p. 68.
26. Adhyātma Sudhātaraṅginī, 1st Tarang, p. 68.
27. Ibid., 1st Tarang, p. 77.
28. V.K.P., pp. 4-5.
29. Ibid., p. 10 etc.
30. Ibid., 3.2.27, p. 210-211.



## CHAPTER II

# ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BHEDĀBHEDA SCHOOL

Bhedābheda School of Vedānta is not a later development but has a long historical background. That it is fairly old, it becomes evident from a number of references by later philosophers, though no earlier work is extant today.

Some scholars have traced this doctrine back to the Vedās itself. "The Bhagvadgītā, which is regarded as the essence of the Upaniṣads, the older Purāṇas and Pañcarātra, dealt within this volume are more or less on the lines of Bhedābheda. In fact the origin of this theory may be traced to the Puruṣa Sūkta."<sup>1</sup>

I approve the fact that Puruṣa Sūkta contains the seeds of Bhedābheda :

“स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम्।”

“एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायांश्च पुरुषः।

पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि॥”<sup>2</sup>

These mantras of the sūkta clearly point to the fact that Brahman is not only identical with this creation, but also greater and distinct from this. And this is the essence of Bhedābheda doctrine, namely Brahman is both different as well as non-different from the world or the creation.

That the doctrine of Bhedābheda finds support from the Upaniṣads, is evident from the two kinds of statements found in the Upaniṣads themselves. There are passages which indicate non-difference between Ātman & Brahman—



“स य एषोऽणिमैतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं तत्सत्यं स आत्मा तत्त्वमसि श्वेतेकेतो” etc.

and there are other passages which indicate difference between Ātman and Brahman such as—

“द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्यनश्नन्न्यो अभिचाकशीति॥”

If both these kinds of passages be given equal importance, the doctrine which seems to be propounded by upaniṣads is clearly Bhedābheda. The same spirit is evident in Bhagvadgītā too.<sup>5</sup>

Bhedābheda school has been properly expounded by the time of the Brahma-Sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa, it can be ascertained from the allusion to three different Bhedābheda-vādins' views in the Brahmasūtras by Bādarāyaṇa himself as :

“प्रतिज्ञासिद्धे-र्लिङ्गमाश्मरथ्यः”

“उत्क्रमिष्यत एवंभावादित्यौडुलौमिः”

“अवस्थितेरिति काशकृत्स्नः”<sup>6</sup>

According to some scholars, Bādarāyaṇa was himself, the propounder of Bhedābheda school and the view of Kāśakṛtsna was his own siddhānta. It is also held that an independent study of the sūtras also leads to the same conclusion. But it is hypothetical and nothing can be said conclusively about Bādarāyaṇa's being the propounder of Bhedābheda-vāda. Still one fact is definite that Bhedābheda doctrine was prevalent even prior to Bādarāyaṇa in some form or the other.

Although no treatise expounding the doctrine of these philosophers has come down to us, still we can know, what their doctrine was, as their philosophical doctrines are quoted by Bādarāyaṇa and others.

As interpreted by Śrīnivāsa, Āśmarathya held that there is difference and non-difference between individual soul and Paramātaman as between cause and its effect. Auḍulomin propounded that there is relation of difference and non-difference between Jīva and Brahman, difference of Jīva from Brahman in the state of saṁsāra and non-difference in the state of release. While Kāśakṛtsna held that the relation of difference and non-difference between Jīva and Brahman is the same as that of between the object controlled and the controller,<sup>7</sup> while Śaṁkarācārya held Kāśakṛtsna to be the propounder of Monism.

Besides this, it has also been established by Dr. Dasgupta that the Vākyakāra referred to, under different names by Rāmānuja, Sarvajñātmamuni and Ānandagiri, is one and the same person, and he is said to have devoted a large part of his work in propounding the Bhedābheda doctrine.<sup>8</sup>

Śaṁkarācārya in his bhāṣya on Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, refutes the view point of Bhartṛprapañca,<sup>9</sup> referred to as the propounder of Bhedābheda-vāda. No written bhāṣyas have come down to us.

We know about the philosophy of Bhartṛprapañca from references only. As said above Śaṁkarācārya refers to his doctrine in his bhāṣya on Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad and Ānandajñāna in his commentary on Śaṁkara Bhāṣya on the Brahma-Sūtra, gives a number of extracts from Bhartṛprapañca's bhāṣya.

### **Bhartṛprapañca**

These references and extracts have been collected and summed up by Mr. M. Hiriyanna. Accordingly Bhartṛprapañca is the first bhedābheda-vādin, from whose bhāṣya, some extracts are available, which helps us to know about his philosophical concepts.



Reality or Brahman in view of Bhartṛprapañca is Para and Apra or higher and Lower, or in other words it is Bhedābheda. Brahman or the absolute is the Supreme Lord. The Jīvas and the material things constitute its Mūrtāmūrta aspects. The infinite evolves into finite yet it is not exhausted and is beyond that.

Bhartṛprapañca propounds Pariṇāmavāda. Brahman evolves into the trinity of Īśvara, Jīva and material world and at the same time remains one whole. Īśvara is the inner ruler of all but lower to Brahman and the Jīvas or the Sākṣins are the next modal manifestations of Brahman of which the most important is Hiranyagarbha. In this way reality evolves itself into various forms of matter and soul. Thus reality exists as the Rāśis or modes. Īśvara, Cit and Acit the three form a unity in trinity.

The relation between Jīva, a real Rāśi or mode of Brahman and Brahman is the relation of substance and modes (Avasthāvat and Avasthāḥ) *i.e.* it is illustrated by the instance of ocean which manifests itself as waves and ripples and yet maintains its self-identity.

According to him, the seeker after Mukti should first meditate on Hiranyagarbha, become one with him, and then he finally transcends this limitation too and attains Mukti.

Bhartṛprapañca insists on Jñāna-karma Samuccaya, *i.e.* synthesis of knowledge and actions alone leads to salvation.

### **Bhāskarācārya**

After him comes Bhāskarācārya, whose bhāṣya has fortunately come down to us. He is said to have flourished after Śaṅkarācārya, in about eighth century A.D. His doctrine is known as Aupādhika-bhedābheda.

His philosophy not only depicts some further develop-

ment in this field but also manifests the unconscious effect of his immediate predecessor Śaṅkarācārya.

He also propounds that Ultimate Reality is Brahman. But it is not Nirviśesa i.e. devoid of all kinds of attributes. To him Brahman is the absolute being in its causal state (कारणात्मा) devoid of all names and forms, but possessed of infinite metaphysical, moral and spiritual perfections. In conditioned form the same Brahman exists as the world of nature (कार्यात्मा)<sup>10</sup> and the world of souls (जीवात्मा). Although he does not accept Brahman to be Nirākāra as Śaṅkarācārya propounds, yet at the same time his concept of Brahman is not similar to that of the later Bhedābheda-vādins like Yādava-Prakāśa or Nimbārka-cārya.

Bhāskarācārya also recommends Pariṇāmavāda like other Bhedābheda-vādins. It is Brahman, which evolves into Cit and Acit.

Jīva is regarded as real as Brahman. According to him it is the upādhi which limits the Unlimited. It is due to upādhis alone that it differentiates itself into manifold Jīvas with its pariṇāma śakti, but at the same time it remains unchanged and transcendent too. It is due to avidyā or ignorance that the absolute is conditioned. Ignorance or Avidyā works due to false identity of the self with empirical life. These Upādhis are also regarded by Bhāskara as real and not illusory.

The Jīva is regarded as an aṁśa or part of Brahman and therefore it is neither different nor non-different from it, that is to say the relation is that of both bheda i.e. difference as well as of abheda i.e. non-difference. As the sparks are neither absolutely identical nor completely different from the fire," Similarly in empirical state the relation of Jīva with Brahman is both bhinna and abhinna. As ākāśa is limited by jar, in the same way Brahman breaks itself, as it were against



the Upādhis and becomes finite centre of experience. Therefore on the dawn of knowledge, these Upādhis vanish and the individual soul realizes its true nature as non-different from pure supreme soul. The individual soul attains Ekibhāva with Brahman which according to some scholars,<sup>12</sup> is, self expansion or unitive consciousness and not absolute identity as in the case of Śaṅkarācārya. It is oneness with Brahman which abolishes the idea of duality or Bhinnatva.

The best means for realization consists of combination of knowledge and action, which is in consonance to the spirit of Bhedābheda-vāda.

Jīvanmukti ideal of Śaṅkarite school is not recommended by him. He accepts, Videhamukti and Kramamukti.

Thus his philosophical concepts step forward in certain aspects such as accepting Bhedābheda relation between Jīva and Brahman only at empirical level. Bhartṛprapañca propounds mukti to be gradual while Bhāskara recommends videhamukti also in addition to gradual liberation (Kramamukti).

But on the other hand Bhāskara's regarding Upādhis as real, created a dualism between Brahman and Upādhis, which has been tried to overcome by Yādava-Prakāśa by the concept of pariṇāma-vāda, also known also as brahma pariṇāma-vāda, as we see presently.

### **Yādava-Prakāśa**

There is confusion regarding the identity of Yādava-Prakāśa. Some identify him with the preceptor of Rāmānuja who flourished in 11th century A.D. But nothing is certain. His Bhāṣya has not come down to us. Sudarśana Suri in his gloss on Śrībhāṣya, well-known as Śrutaprakāśikā identifies, the view of Yādava-Prakāśa with the view of Āśmarathya summed up in Brahmasūtras<sup>13</sup> :

“अयं यादवप्रकाशपक्षोऽस्मिन् सूत्र उपन्यस्तः। तत्र हि कार्यात्मना कारणात्मना च जीवब्रह्मणोर्भेदाभेदौ स्वाभाविकौ मतो।”

His philosophical concepts are mainly known from the reference contained in the works of Rāmānuja and Paramātmabhaṅga of Vedānta-Deśika.<sup>14</sup>

Reality according to Yādava-Prakāśa is also bhinnābhinna from the ultimate point of view. It is one and identical with Itself but at the same time, It differentiates Itself into Cit and Acit also.

He accepts pariṇāmavāda. It is due to its pariṇāmaśakti that It emanates Itself into manifold.

Pariṇāmaśakti is the creative urge at the heart of Brahman and not something which vanishes like illusion. Therefore his pariṇāmavāda is known as Brahma-pariṇāmavāda. And by this theory Yādava-Prakāśa has tried to overcome the discrepancy of dualism, created by the concept of accepting upādhis as real (सत्योपाधिः) in the system of Bhāskara. Like upādhi, the creative power of Brahman, is not something external or its reality is not limited to the empirical world only which would vanish on realisation, but it is present always or rather it should be said as inherent in Brahman, though its working is manifested at proper times.

The individual self or Cit, which is an integral element of the absolute, identifies itself with the body and its pleasures and pains, and as a consequence falls prey to the endless circles of this Saṁsāra. The causes of bondage of Jīva are classified by Yādava-Prakāśa under three heads—(1) Prakṛtibandha, (2) Vaikārikabandha, and (3) Dakṣiṇabandha. The first consists of desire for products of Prakṛti, the second consists of desire for sensibility and third consists of moral causality of karma.

Yādava-Prakāśa also propounds that the relation of Jīva



and Brahman is Bhedābheda i.e. Jīva is both different as well as non-different from Brahman in empirical state as well as in released state, while Bhāskara maintains non-difference during released state. But Yādava-Prakāśa gives equal emphasis on bheda and abheda, as later on, given by Nimbārka-cārya and others.

Yādava-Prakāśa is more idealistic than Bhāskarā-cārya and regards both Cit and Acit as equal expressions. According to him there is no difference between Cit and Acit. Everything is sentient, in Acit or insentient objects such as pitcher etc., the consciousness is in unmanifested form, while in sentient objects it is manifested—

“यादवप्रकाशमते सर्वमपि चेतनमेव; तत्र घटादेशचैतन्यानभिव्यक्ति-  
मात्रमेवेति न चिदचित्त्विभागः।”<sup>15</sup>

and therefore Acit is Cit in unmanifested form. Thus he denies the qualitative distinctions between the two.

Yādava-Prakāśa also holds that synthesis of both knowledge and actions (Jñāna-Karma-Samuccaya) leads to liberation which destroys the sense of difference and one realizes the relation of difference and non-difference between Jīva and Brahman. The finite is not absorbed in the infinite but realizes its true relation with Brahman.

In Yādava-Prakāśa's philosophy we find an effort to remove certain discrepancies of his predecessors as said before, and at the same time there are some concepts, such as theory of transformation etc., which are followed by the later Bhedābheda-vādins. We get reference to Keśava also, who is said to have lived after Bhāskara and followed him. But among the later philosophers of this school, Svābhāvika Bhedābheda of Nimbārka is the most prominent.

**Nimbārka-cārya**

Nimbārka-cārya is well-known as the propounder of

Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda-vāda. He flourished in the 12th century. His father's name was Aruṇa and mother's Jayantī. Therefore he was also known as Āruṇi and Jayanteya. He was known as Niyamānanda or Nimbāditya too. Though settled in Vṛndāvana, he travelled far and wide in the country.

We get reference to a number of works, written by Nimbārka, some of which have come down to us. Foremost of these, is the commentary named *Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha*, written on the *Brahma-sūtras*, which propounds the doctrine of Nimbārka-cārya and has the distinction of being the most concise commentary. Nimbārka-cārya does not engage in refutation of other Vedāntic schools and is satisfied in presenting the meaning of sūtras in as few words as possible without giving much details.<sup>16</sup>

Nimbārka composed *Daśa-Śloki*. The treatise contains his views regarding the nature of three realities Kṛṣṇa, Cit and Acit and the means of His attainment.

He also composed a treatise consisting of twenty-five verses known as *Saviśeṣa-Nirviśeṣa Kṛṣṇa-stava-rāja*.<sup>17</sup>

Some other works such as *Madhva-mukha-Mardana*, *Svadharmādhva-bodha*, *Prapatti-Cintāmaṇi*, *Aitihiya-tattvarāddhānta* are also said to have been composed by him.<sup>18</sup>

According to Nimbārka Brahman, Cit and Acit are the three Realities. According to him Brahman is *Puruṣottama* or united figure (युगलमूर्तिः) of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā (रमाकान्तः)<sup>19</sup> He is the lord of all and the controller of all. No one is higher than Him.<sup>20</sup> He is called Brahman, because He excels all, by His Svābhāvika guṇas and śaktis :

“स्वाभाविकस्वरूपगुणशक्त्यादिभिर्बृहत्तमो यो रमाकान्तः पुरुषोत्तमः  
ब्रह्मशब्दाभिधेयः।”<sup>21</sup>

Therefore Brahman according to him is the personal God.



Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe but in what sense it is not clarified by Nimbārka-cārya. He is the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. He accepts Parīṇāmavāda and holds that the creation is transformation of powers of Brahman.

Brahman is gracious to his votaries and out of compassion, manifests, Its form to them. It is the giver of the fruits of the respective actions of individual selves.<sup>22</sup>

Nimbārka also regards the scriptures as authoritative proof for establishing the existence of Brahman, who is (अनिर्वचनीयः) indescribable, otherwise.

The Cit or the Jiva is the second Reality accepted by him. The individual self is ज्ञानस्वरूपः i.e. of the nature of consciousness. The individual self is knower (ज्ञाता)<sup>23</sup> also, besides having knowledge for its essence. To say that the individual self is knowledge and has knowledge for its attribute, is not contradictory. It indicates the relation of substratum and attribute between the Jiva and knowledge.<sup>24</sup>

The individual self is the object of the notion of 'I' (अहमर्थः) and this 'Ahamartha' persists in released state too.<sup>25</sup>

That the self is also doer (कर्त्ता) and enjoyer (भोक्ता) of the fruits of actions performed by it, it is proved by declaration made by the Śāstra, that the individual self is capable of obtaining the salvation by meditation.

The size of the Jiva is atomic<sup>26</sup> (अणुः). Though situated in the heart, it experiences the happiness and sorrow of the whole body like a drop of sandal wood situated at one part of the body, imparts coolness to the whole body. It is Anu even in the released state.

The individual self is eternal and unchanging. Its states of waking, dream and deep sleep are controlled by Īśvara.

It is a part (अंशः) of Brahman. By part, an actual part cut off from the whole should not be understood. By the part is meant, that it is different as well as non-different from Brahman, as śakti is different as well as non-different from śaktimān. Thus by the self being part of Brahman is meant that both are related by the relation of power and powerful.

The Acit or insentient element consists of three elements namely Prākṛta, Aprākṛta and Kāla. Prākṛta is the name given to that which is derived or evolved from Prakṛti or Primal Matter. What is precisely meant by Aprākṛta and Kāla, is not explained by him. It is explained by Śrīnivāsācārya as we will see in the next chapter. The relation subsisting between the Cit, Acit and Brahman is Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda. The individual self is different as well as non-different from Brahman. It is different from Brahman, who is, its inner controller<sup>27</sup> and who is never subject to happiness and sorrow like the Jīva. On the other hand the Jīva being effect (karya) of Brahman is also non-different from It.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore the relation between the two is Bhedābheda. It is Svābhāvika or natural as it is not brought about by any external agency and therefore it persists in all states of the self in the bound as well as in the released.

The same is the relation between the Acit and Brahman. Acit is different from Brahman, being its effect,<sup>29</sup> the former being sentient, non-gross and so on, while the latter is insentient, gross and so on. The Acit is non-different from It, being dependent on It for its existence. As coil of the serpent is dependent on the serpent.<sup>30</sup>

Mokṣa or liberation according to Nimbārkaācārya, consists in attaining the similarity with Brahman after the realization—



ब्रह्मसाक्षात्काराद्धेतोस्तेन सह साम्यं याति।<sup>31</sup>

Mokṣa consists not only in the realization of Brahman, but also in the realization of one's own nature. The Bhedābheda relation existing between Jīva and Brahman persists even in Mokṣa.

Nimbārka-cārya alludes to a number of Sādhanaś or means of realization. Karma or actions purify the mind of seeker of Mokṣa and help in the rise of Vidyā or knowledge. The external performance of sacrifices etc. are enjoined along with the internal control of the senses.

Learning, childlike simplicity and profound thinking are also helpful in the rise of Vidyā or knowledge.

Nimbārka-cārya lays stress on Bhakti i.e. devotion<sup>32</sup> and prapatti i.e. self surrender. Surrender to Guru<sup>33</sup> or the preceptor has been accepted as very significant by him.

As is evident from this short account of Nimbārka's philosophy, he left a number of facts unexplained or half explained. The work was undertaken by his disciple Śrīnivāśācārya who wrote Vedānta-Kaustubha. Śrīnivāśācārya, is one of the most Prominent commentators of Nimbārka School, who not only clarified the theoretical background of the school, but also helped in the spreading of the doctrines of the school by his literary works.

To conclude, we can say that historically, Bhedābheda School of Vedānta can be traced back to a fairly old period. Its existence was prior even to the Brahmasūtras and its seeds obtainable from the Veda itself, although systematisation took place at a later period, say in 500 B.C. Because the Brahmasūtras are ascribed to about 200 B.C., and Bhedābheda is even prior to that. What may have been its time of origin, its developments which have been recorded and have come down to us have been shown in the present chapter. The full

development of this system took place at the time of flourishing of Nimbārka School, of which Śrīnivāsa, one of the most prominent scholar, has been taken up in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER III  
PART I  
**PHILOSOPHY OF ŚRĪNIVĀSĀCĀRYA  
AS CONTAINED IN VEDĀNTA-  
KAUSTUBHA**

The philosophical doctrines of Śrīnivāsācārya as contained in Vedānta-Kaustubha do not merely elucidate the doctrine of Nimbārkaācārya but are also marked with ingenuity in conception and treatment. That is why Vedānta-Kaustubha does not seem to be a mere gloss but an independent work and therefore it requires special attention.

**Realities**

Śrīnivāsācārya accepts 'Tattva' or Reality to be threefold—viz. Brahman, Cit and Acit —

“तत्त्वं तावन्निविधम्। चिदचिद्ब्रह्मभेदात्।”

Brahman is the supreme Reality, Cit stands for conscious entity i.e. individual soul and Acit stands for unconscious entity. These would be treated at their proper places. One thing may be noted at the very outset, which is emphasized by Śrīnivāsācārya again and again is that Brahman alone is Independent (Svatantra). The activities, existence etc. of the other two realities is dependent on It but this does not create dualism (Dvaita) as in the system of Madhvācārya and should not be mixed with that.

**Brahman**

The question of Saguna and Nirguna Brahman does not arise in the system of Śrīnivāsa as in the case of his



predecessors such as Bhāskara etc. Because Śrīnivāsa regards Brahman to be a universal soul, which is both transcendent as well as immanent. Brahman is also called variously as Śrīkrṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, Puruṣottama, Nārāyaṇa, Paramātmā, Bhagawān and so on. Nimbārkācārya refers to Śrīkrṣṇa along with his consort Rādhā but it is not seen in the case of Śrīnivāsa who does not refer to Rādhā. Śrīnivāsācārya holds that Śrīkrṣṇa in the form of Pārāśara, composed the Brahma-Sūtra to relieve people of their delusion—

“...भगवान् पुरुषोत्तमः वासुदेवः पाराशर्यात्मना नानाकुतर्कविमोहितान् जीवान्वीक्ष्य तेषु स्वज्ञानभवती द्रढयितुं निःसंशयतया परब्रह्मप्रतिपत्तये शारीरिकमीमांसाख्यं वेदान्तशास्त्रं सूत्रयामास ।”

Brahman is supreme being, resort of all auspicious qualities, possesses unthinkable attributes. It is omnipresent, omniscient, Lord of all,<sup>3</sup> greater than all etc. No one is either equal or superior to It. Brahman is said to be both Bhinna as well as Abhinna—

“सर्वभिन्नाभिन्नो भगवान्वासुदेवः ।”

Vāsudeva is Abhinna as the cause of the universe and Bhinna in the form of this universe consisting of Cit and Acit.

He is the creator, cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of the world—

“सर्वशक्तिः सार्वज्ञ्यादिगुणवान् सर्वेश्वरः पुरुषोत्तम एव जगद्धेतुरिति निश्चेतुं शक्यते ।”

It is He from whom, the universe emerges out, on whom it subsists and in whom it finally merges.<sup>6</sup>

He is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world. His upādānatva is worded by Śrīnivāsācārya as—

“परापरादिशब्दाभिधेयानां स्वस्वाभाविकीनां सूक्ष्मावस्थापन्नानां शक्तीनां तत्तद्गतसद्द्रूपकार्याणाञ्च स्थूलतयाप्रकाशकत्वमुपादानत्वम् ।”



He is the material cause of the world in the sense of turning the powers existing in Him, from the subtle form into the gross form. These powers called as *Parā* and *Aparā* are not separate or rather different from *Paramātman* but are inherent in Him. These are related to Him by the relation of *śakti* and *śaktimān* i.e. power and powerful. These powers existing in Him in subtle form at the time of dissolution are turned into gross form which give rise to various further effects.

Brahman is also the *nimitta* or efficient cause of this universe, the fact is put forth by *Śrīnivāsācārya* in these words—

“स्वस्वानादिकर्मसंस्कारवशीभूतात्यन्तसंकुचितभोगस्मरणानर्हज्ञानधर्माणां  
चेतनानां कर्मफलभोगार्हज्ञानप्रकाशनेन तत्तत्कर्मफलतत्तद्भोगसाधनैः सह  
योजयितृत्वम् निमित्ततृत्वम्।”<sup>88</sup>

He is the efficient cause in the sense that He unites the individual selves with the fruits of their respective actions. Why and how he does this is also explained here. The individual selves are incapable of recollecting the impressions of past births due to working of unending circle of actions and their fruits and He enables them to enjoy their respective fruits of actions by means of providing respective instruments as well as required knowledge. By saying that He provides knowledge perhaps *Śrīnivāsa* wants to say that without some knowledge, one cannot distinguish between good or bad fruits and in that case one cannot enjoy happiness or feel sorrow for some pleasant or unpleasant happening. Therefore Brahman provides knowledge to enjoy and to reap the fruits of their actions.

*Śrīnivāsācārya* accepts *Parīṇāmavāda* or Doctrine of Transformation. ‘*Parīṇāma*’ as is commonly known, is real change and is to be distinguished from ‘*Vivarta*’ or apparent change. At the time of creation Brahman transforms Its



ownself in the form of universe. Transformation of Brahman consists of transformation of Its powers, which exist in It permanently and are controlled by It—

“...स्वात्मकस्वाधिष्ठितनिजशक्तविक्षेपेण जगदाकारं स्वात्मानं परिणमयति।”

Brahman is both transcendent as well as immanent. It is transcendent because It is beyond and more than the mere aggregate of created Cit and Acit beings and immanent because It resides in the heart of human beings as their inner controller—

सर्वात्मा सर्वनियन्ता च।<sup>10</sup>

Bhagawān is also beyond the sway of actions and three guṇas. He is manifested only in meditation to votaries and unmanifested otherwise. He is controller of the three states of individual selves in waking, dream and deep sleep. According to Śrīnivāsa dreams are also created by Paramātmān because individual self being, devoid of सत्यसंकल्पत्वं etc. powers in the bound state, is incompetent to create these.

He is always an abode of knowledge and bliss and confers these on individual selves at released state. He has abundant bliss or Ānanda which is celestial and not ephemeral.”

He alone is the giver of fruits of actions to individual souls—

“परमात्मफलदातृत्वस्य श्रुतत्वाच्च अस्मादेव फलं भवितुमर्हति।”<sup>12</sup>

He refutes the view point of Jaimini that Apūrvā is the giver of fruits. It is He, who confers fruits on all in accordance to one's actions, good or bad and without being partial to anyone. He is also the giver of salvation and stretches His helping hand to His votaries to enable them to receive His direct vision and so on. He is the creator of Nāma-rūpa i.e. name and form but He Himself, is beyond it. He is Āptakāma

i.e. all of his desires are satisfied and अपहतपाप्मा i.e. being devoid of all kinds of sins or doṣas.

As pointed out already, Śrīnivāsa contends Brahman to be Saguṇa. Therefore a number of scriptural passages which declare it as Nirguṇa etc. are interpreted by him in a different way, he holds that the word 'Nirguṇa' applied to it indicates Its being devoid of inauspicious qualities and it does not mean the absolute negation of all kinds of attributes and so on. Similarly other words such as Nirākāra etc. are explained as denoting absence of inauspicious form and so on. To put it in other words Śrīnivāsa upholds the view that Śrīkṛṣṇa is possessed of all kinds of auspicious attributes ultimately. The relative qualities such as virtue and vice, auspiciousness or inauspiciousness do not touch Him.<sup>13</sup>

The general nature of Brahman being established thus, there remains a question i.e. what is the proof of the existence of Brahman? Like other Indian philosophers, Śrīnivāsācārya declares Śabda or scriptures to be conclusive proof in this matter, These scriptures are declared as divine or अपौरुषेयः and said to have come down to us through the seers (द्रष्टारः) who gave expressions to the truths which they perceived through the divine inspiration. Therefore Śāstras are to be regarded as authoritative. Admitted, that reasoning is also helpful in the solution of a number of problems ; and helps a lot. But at the same time it is also true that reasoning is also limited and cannot help in grasping each and every thing. The higher metaphysical things cannot be grasped by reasoning alone. Therefore one has to take shelter in the experiences of great seers whose documents are recorded in our scriptures. We should not forget the fact that these different seers, although definitely spiritually higher person, would colour the indescribable (अनिर्वचनीयः) reality in their own personal way. Therefore there are differences on the



methods of approach as well as on the description of Reality. But inspite of that, until one finds out the method of approach for oneself and realizes Brahman, one has to resort to these seers' statements for advancement in this field. In this sense authority of these scriptures may said to be unquestionable.

The nature of Brahman as described, raises certain general problems which Śrīnivāsa tried to solve.

Foremost of these, is that if Brahman is आप्तकामः i.e. all of His desires are fulfilled then what is the purpose in creating this Universe ? In day to-day matters we find that each and every work of even tiny animate beings is motivated by some purpose or other. So should be in the case of the creation of this world. There must be some desire or motive working behind it. But on the other hand Śruti declares, It to be Āptakāma then why does It create this Universe ? Secondly a creation is not merely for the good of the individual selves; because it is a circle of doing work and reaping its fruits that leads to entanglement in various kinds of sorrows and anxieties. Even if It created this world why creation was not on equal basis, why is there a difference in fortune of people and so on ?

### **Līlāvāda**

For the solution of the first problem, namely- why Āptakāma Brahman created the universe Śrīnivāsācārya, like other Vedāntists, takes resort to the well-known theory of Līlā as propounded by Bādarāyaṇa in the Brahmasūtras— “लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम्”<sup>14</sup>. The fact that a number of theories were propounded for the solution of the problems is evident from Gauḍapāda's Kārikas—

“विभूतिं प्रसवं त्वन्ये मन्यन्ते सृष्टिचिन्तकाः।

स्वप्नमायासरूपेति सृष्टिरन्यैर्विकल्पिताः॥

इच्छामात्रं प्रभोः सृष्टिरिति सृष्टौ विनिश्चिताः।  
 कालात्प्रसूतिं भूतानां मन्यन्ते कालचिन्तकाः॥  
 भोगार्थं सृष्टिरित्यन्ये क्रीडार्थमिति चापरे।  
 देवस्यैष स्वभावोऽयमाप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा॥<sup>15</sup>

But among these various theories, all the Vedāntists accept Līlāvāda, though the interpretations differ suiting their respective doctrines.

By the word Līlā is meant, sportive activity. In other words anything which is done as easily and delightfully as a sport, without causing any exertion. As is put forth by Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar—"Līlā signifies a spontaneous sportive activity, as distinguished from a self-conscious volitional effort and stress."<sup>16</sup>

Accepting this theory Śrīnivāsācārya holds that the creation is Līlā of Brahman. It is illustrated by the instance of a sovereign king, who with all of his longing fulfilled indulges in sports sometimes—

“यथा खलु लोके प्राप्तैश्वर्यस्य सार्वभौमस्य फलसंकल्पं विनैव विचित्रमक्षकन्दुकादिभिर्विक्रीडन् लीलामात्रं दृश्यते, तथा ब्रह्मणोऽपि लीला-कैवल्यं, केवलं विश्वोत्पादानादिक्रीडामात्रमित्यर्थः।”<sup>17</sup>

The point is further clarified by Keśava Kāśmīri Bhatta—

“यथा वा सुखोन्मत्तस्य सुखोद्रेकात्फलनिरपेक्षनर्तनादि।”<sup>18</sup>

As a person in exuberance of delight cannot resist dancing singing etc., irrespective of any fruit, in the same way Brahman in the outflow of Bliss creates the universe without any purpose or motive working behind it.

Here a paralleled instance of a child may be cited, who dances and sings in excessive happiness without any motive or desire. It is the natural reaction of happiness. This is what is implied in the concept of Līlā. Creation is a natural outcome of Brahman, immersed in Bliss. Here it would not be out of place to refer to other Vedāntists on the point of Līlāvāda.



Śaṅkarācārya, while interpreting this Sūtra puts stress on the spontaneity of creative activity. The act of creation, on the part of Brahman, is just like the tendency of kings and ministers towards sportive activities, which are undertaken without any purpose in view. But it might be objected that these sportive activities are also meant for recreation at least. This objection is put off by providing another illustration. As breathing takes place without any effort on the part of living beings as 'Svabhāva'. Similarly creative act takes place without the help or any assistance and effort. Moreover neither Śruti nor Nyāya supports the fact that there can be a purpose for the fulfilment of which creation proceeds. It is merely 'Svabhāva' which cannot be altered or replaced. This universe appearing to be a great work for us is mere Līlā for Brahman due to Its being possessed of unlimited powers—

“तथा लोके कस्यचिदाप्तैषणस्य राज्ञोः राजामात्यस्य वा व्यतिरिक्तं किञ्चित्प्रयोजनमनभिसन्धाय केवलं लीलारूपाः प्रवृत्तयः क्रीडाविहारेषु भवन्ति। यथा चोच्छ्वासप्रश्वासादयोऽनभिसन्धाय बाह्यं किञ्चित्प्रयोजनानन्तरं स्वभावादेव केवलं लीलारूपाः प्रवृत्तिर्भविष्यति। न हीश्वरस्य प्रयोजनानन्तरं निरूप्यमाणं न्यायतः श्रुतितो वा सम्भवति। न च स्वभावः पर्यनुयोक्तुं शक्यते। यद्यप्यस्माकमियं जगद्बिम्ब विरचना गुरुतरसंरम्भेवाभाति। तथापि परमेश्वरस्य लीलैव केवलेयम्। अपरिमितशक्तित्वात्।”

An additional ground has been presented by the commentator Vācaspati Miśra when he says creation is not Pārmārthika i.e. real from ultimate point of view, it is real only from worldly point of view (व्यावहारिक सत्ता) therefore no purpose is required for its creation—

“अपि च नेयं पारमार्थिकी सृष्टिर्येनानुयुज्येते प्रयोजनम्।”

Bhāskara almost follows Śaṅkarācārya in this respect and takes Līlā to mean 'Svabhāva'. Therefore creative activity is a spontaneous activity and not deliberate or volitional.



Theistic Vedāntists like Madhvācārya, Rāmānujā-cārya and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa hold that Līlā implies that spontaneous activity which is caused by overflowing Bliss, as is upheld by Śrīnivāsa, shown above—

“यथा लोके मतस्य सुखोद्रेकादेव नृत्तगानादिलीला न प्रयोजनपेक्षया एवमेवेश्वरस्य।”<sup>21</sup>

*i.e.* as a person, intoxicated by overflow of happiness indulges in dancing, singing etc. activities, being irrespective of any purpose, same is true in the case of Īśvara.

As is evident from this short discussion, for Śrīnivāsa and other theistic Vedāntists Līlā stands for spontaneous activity accompanied by exuberance of Bliss, and this is a more plausible interpretation. Dr. Rādhā Kṛṣṇan<sup>22</sup> also says that Its joy overflows into existence. This spontaneous outflow is symbolized by Līlāvāda, same thing is put by M.N. Sircar in these words—“The functioning of will for a definite purpose is the work of a finite being. Īśvara is willing but to no definite purpose, it must necessarily be an expression in delight, for bliss, is Its soul, delight, the expression. A step further and we may add that even volitional effort is centred in delight, willing is move to delight and in delight. And because in finite consciousness such a move is directed beyond self ; we become apt to identify willing with a conscious striving for the removal of a want or a need. But deeper psychological analysis reveals that willing is fed in delight, the final satisfaction is consequent upon fulfilment. Willing is then the search and the expression of delight consciousness in finite being and expression solely in the infinite.”<sup>23</sup>

Therefore the Līlāvāda seems to be the nearest approach in solving the problem why this universe was created? some scholars hold that “Brahman and the universe are co-relatives,



one implying the other. Hence the evolution of the universe is a logical necessity on the part of Brahman. If the universe is impossible without Brahman, Brahman, is no less incomplete without the universe."<sup>24</sup> But I donot think that the universe can be a logical necessity on Brahman, who is above all these things. Secondly as far as I understand Lilāvāda does not imply this fact.

Acceptance of Lilāvāda leads to another objection. If creation is Lilā, is it also irrelevant like any Lilā or there is some criterion working behind it ? To this, it is replied, that He creates the universe in such a way ; so that the beings may be able to reap the fruits of their respective actions. He is impartial and helps to enable living beings to reap the fruits of their actions like the cloud which pours rain equally every where; and it depends on the difference in seeds and soil, which causes difference in crops.<sup>25</sup>

Another question may be raised here *i.e.* how was the nature of first creation determined ? To this it is replied by all Indian philosophers and same is naturally said by Śrīnivāsa, that creation is beginningless (अनादिः) and endless (अनन्तः) and therefore the question of first creation does not arise. But this does not satisfy a logical mind and the solution given shows the inability of human minds or rather limitation which we cannot overcome. So we again come to our last point.

Brahman is said to be the material cause of this world and it is also said<sup>26</sup> that all of the material evolutes come out from Prakṛti or matter. There is no contradiction involved in these two statements. Prakṛti which is said to evolve the various objects works in accordance to the wish of Brahman and is dependent on Him and not independent in its activities and therefore Brahman is the material cause of the universe

ultimately and not Prakṛti. Here another problem arises—it is held in the Sūtra 'जन्माद्यस्य यतः' that at the time of creation, powers of Brahman known as Parā and Aparā existing in it inherently, in subtle form are transformed into gross form, give rise to various products of this universe consisting of animate and inanimate objects. Then how can Prakṛti and Parā and Aparā both be said to give rise to various evolutes at the same time ? Śrīnivāsācārya does not give any clue, as to how these two are reconciled. But as appears from his interpretation of the Sūtra—

‘कल्पनोपदेशाच्च मध्वादिवदविरोधः’ as

‘अव्याकृता सूक्ष्मरूपा ब्रह्मशक्तिः प्रकृतिर्ब्रह्मशक्तित्वाद्ब्रह्मवन्नित्याजे-  
त्युच्यते, सैव शक्तिमता विसृष्टा कार्यात्मना स्थिता सती ब्रह्मोपक्रमेत्युच्यते।’

He does not seem to hold any distinction between Śakti of Brahman and Prakṛti, perhaps according to him, Prakṛti is equated to Aparā of Brahman, but it is not stated clearly any where.

Another very natural objection is raised in our ordinary life. We observe that the material cause and its effects are of same kind, then either universe should also be of the nature of Brahman, consisting of Cit and Acit objects or It is not the material cause of this universe. To this Śrīnivāsa replies that similarity between cause and effect is not true every where and in every instance. Because we also take notice of diverse nature of cause and its effects, as nails, hair etc. of different nature arise from the Puruṣa. Parallel instance of animate scorpion taking birth from inanimate or ‘jaḍa’ cow-dung is also cited—

“यदुक्तं नास्य जगतो ब्रह्मप्रकृतिकत्वं तद्विलक्षणत्वादिति तन्न । यतः  
पुरुषाद्विलक्षणानां नखलोमादीनां गोमयाद्वृश्चिकस्य विलक्षणस्योत्पत्तिर्दृश्यते  
तस्मादित्यर्थः ।”

To the objection that at the time of dissolution, the



universe with all its virtue and vice returning to Vāsudeva might defile Him, it is replied that at the time of dissolution, the world remains in Him, as His own potency and does not defile Him just like products of earth like pot etc., when again turned to earth do not defile it by their guṇa or doṣa—

“यथा च पृथिवीविकाराः पृथिव्यां लीयमानाः स्वधर्मैः पृथिवीं न दूषयन्ति, तथा चेतनाचेतनात्मकमिदञ्जगत् चिदचिच्छक्तिमति ब्रह्मणि लीयमानं चिदचिच्छक्तिमद् ब्रह्मैव दूषयतीत्यर्थः।”<sup>30</sup>

If universe is transformation of Brahman then the question arises whether Brahman is सावयवम् i.e. consisting of parts or निरवयवम् i.e. without parts ? If He is निरवयवं then He, the whole, would be transformed into world, in that case Brahman would become gross and there would remain no Brahman beyond this world to be approached by the liberated. On the other hand if He is सावयवं, then the texts describing Him as without parts would be contradictory to the scriptural texts describing Brahman as without parts i.e. निरवयवम् and so on.<sup>31</sup> The question is answered by Śrīnivāsācārya in a lucid and exhaustive manner, who says that both of these so called Doṣas (कृत्स्नप्रसक्तिर्निरवयवशब्द कोपश्च ) do not incur in the case of Brahman. He says that the universe is not transformation of a part or whole of Brahman. It is the mere manifestation of the potencies inherent in It, in subtle form, without affecting It in the least.

Brahman is transformed into the world without the help of any extraneous means just as a spider weaves its web without any external assistance—

“ऊर्णनाभिरिव बाह्यकारकमनपेक्ष्य ब्रह्म जगदाकारेण परिणमते ततो न निरवयवशब्दकोपोऽपि।”<sup>32</sup>

In this respect another question is raised namely that this school accepts transformation to be mere manifestation

of subtle powers into gross form, which is not very different from the concept of Sāṅkhya school. To this he replies that there is difference between the two. Sāṅkhya school accepts Prakṛti to be the cause of the world which is quite independent in activities etc ; from Puruṣa,<sup>33</sup> which is not accepted by Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda-vāda. They hold Brahman to be all powerful, who inspires these powers and controls their activities. It is Vāsudeva, who transforms भोग्यशक्तिः i.e. power of enjoyment (objects) in the form of insentient objects such as Ākāśa etc. and भोक्तृशक्तिः i.e. power of enjoyer, into the form of sentient beings such as gods, human beings etc. It is He, who causes the various beings to enjoy their fruits of karmas and in the end draws them in, as tortoise contracts his legs inside. This is the main difference between the two schools and therefore the view point of Sāṅkhya school cannot be accepted.

It is also pointed out that as there is non-difference between Ātman and Brahman, then it would be liable to undergo the sorrows and happiness of individual selves entangled in various births and thus would incur the fault which is known as हिताकरणदिदोषः i.e. fault of doing what is not beneficial to It.<sup>34</sup> To this Śrīnivāsācārya replies that such doṣas are not possible in the case of Brahman as It is not only non-different, but also different from Ātman in nature and is not touched by the faults of individual self—

“एवमभेदेऽपि भेदव्यपदेशान्नेहिताकरणादिदोष-प्रसक्तिरिति।”<sup>35</sup>

That is why individual soul is known as संसारी as one who migrates and the other असंसारी i.e. the one who does not transmigrate.

Lastly Brahman is said to possess only good and auspicious qualities, which seems irrelevant to some. This seemingly incongruency is also removed by some scholars



who hold that evils and vices are evils only from the point of human beings and these are relative i.e. changeable according to time and place, and not absolute. While goodness and virtues are real from absolute point of view. Therefore Brahman is said to be possessed of only good and auspicious qualities. This can be the possible explanation of what Śrīnivāsa wants to convey, when he describes Śrīkṛṣṇa as possessed of auspicious qualities and devoid of all sins—

“समस्तकल्याणैकराशित्वम्।”<sup>136</sup> etc.

Here he is very near to Rāmānuja, who interprets these words in the similar way.

### Cit or Individual soul

The second Reality accepted by this school is Cit or Individual soul. It is different from body, sense organs, mind, Prāṇa and Buddhi, all of these are dependent on Individual soul and serve as instrument in such actions as seeing, hearing and so on,<sup>37</sup> and are described as Upakaraṇas of individual soul or Jīva.

The nature of Jīvātman is described by Śrīnivāsa as—

“जीवात्माज्ञ एव ज्ञानस्वरूपत्वे सति ज्ञातृत्ववानेव”<sup>138</sup>

i.e. individual soul is knower and being of the nature of knowledge possesses the attribute of knowledge. The individual self is said to be of the nature of knowledge, because by describing it as merely possessor of knowledge, as an attribute would merely render it to be jaḍa or insentient object, which is contrary to the nature of individual soul, as described by scriptural texts which state it to be चैतन्यः or consciousness constituting its very essence.

From the description of Jīvātman as both ज्ञानस्वरूपः and then as ज्ञातृत्ववान् there seems to be contradiction involved in this. This contradiction though apparent, is not clarified by

Śrīnivāsācārya. Mr. Haridas Bhattacharya has tried to explain it.<sup>39</sup> According to him, if consciousness be the essence of the individual soul only, then nothing else is needed for the knowledge of day to-day happenings as well as future events. Every thing would be known to it from the very beginning and nothing would remain which is to be known by it during its existence. But as it is not so and there is appearance and disappearance, increase or decrease of knowledge, so something more is needed there to explain this phenomenon and for that it is said that it has knowledge as its attribute too.

Dr. Roma Bose explains it as—“The individual self, the substratum and knowledge, the attribute, are equally knowledge, yet there is distinction between them, as declared by scriptures itself, so that the relation of substratum and attribute is possible between them.”<sup>40</sup>

From my point of view Śrīnivāsa describes Jīva as Jñānasvarūpa from the point of view of individual soul's being non-different (अभेदः) from Brahman.

And it is described as ज्ञातृत्ववान् from the point of Jīva's being different (भेदः) from It. Jīva is both different as well as non-different from Brahman and so its nature is also described from both point of views.

The view of Dr. Roma Bose is also near the mark and is supported by the statement in Vedānta-Kaustubha itself—

“..पृथगुपदेशात् ज्ञानत्वाविशेषेऽपि श्रुत्युक्तत्वात् धर्मधर्मिणोर्भेदो युक्त इत्यर्थः।”<sup>41</sup>

i.e. there is no difference between ज्ञान as essence and ज्ञान as attribute, still to be of same nature does not mean there is non-difference between the two things. It is clarified by the illustration of Prabhā i.e. flame and its Tejas or lustre. There is no difference between the flame and lustre, still there is



difference between the two, same is the case here. Though there is no difference, between knowledge as substratum and as attribute, still there is difference and to indicate this fact the nature of individual soul is described in this way.

Individual self is said to be ज्ञानस्वरूपः and therefore knowledge exists in all its states, waking, dreaming and deep sleep. in the latter two states it remains, however, unmanifest like manhood in the state of childhood. As manhood is present in childhood also, still there it is in undeveloped form and therefore remains unmanifested and is manifested in youth fully. Similarly knowledge, though present in dream and deep sleeping states remains unrevealed to others.

“जीवधर्मभूतस्य ज्ञानस्य यावदात्मभावित्वमेव।”<sup>42</sup>

It is also pointed out here that due to persistence of this attribute as long as the Ātman exists, which is eternal, the attribute forming its essence also exists for ever and due to this the Jīva is sometimes stated to be Vibhu in some of the scriptural passages.

Being knower (ज्ञः) individual self is the object of the notion of ‘I’ and it is described as

“अहमप्रत्ययगोचरोऽयमात्मा”<sup>43</sup>

and this ‘Ahamartha’ lasts even in liberation where also it continues to be as individual but does not experience such feelings as different from Brahman etc., since it has realized its true nature.

A necessary corollary to individual self’s being intelligent principle is its being an agent. It is an agent, this fact is approved by the scriptural passages which lay down liberation and enjoyment for the individual self—

“भुक्तिमुक्त्यर्हचेतनापेक्षितसाधनबोधकस्य शास्त्रस्यार्थकत्वात्।”<sup>44</sup>

and this can be obtained by the Jīva, if it is a conscious doer.

Its agency is also proved by the fact that it is said to roam in the body according to its desires.<sup>45</sup> The view that Buddhi is the agent is refuted by Śrīnivāsa. Buddhi is just like an instrument and being insentient cannot engage in an activity or refrain (abstain) from doing it, according to its volition. It depends on individual self, who is capable to engage in same activity or not just as a carpenter, when willing, does his work, otherwise does not do it.<sup>46</sup>

To the objection, that if individual self is an agent, then it should be always be absorbed in those activities, which may yield beneficial fruits. Why such activities are undertaken which result in undesirable fruits? The objection is met with the saying, that in the bound state individual soul is not omniscient and omnipotent to foresee the future results of its actions. Secondly it is the Saṁskāras or impressions of past births which play a significant part in inspiring human beings to a particular action—

“दैवयोगाच्छुभायां क्वचिदशुभायां प्रवृत्तिर्दर्शनात्।”<sup>47</sup>

It has been established that the Jīva is agent (कर्त्ता), still for agency it is ultimately dependent on Brahman. It is he who remaining within the heart of all, inspires them to perform various functions,<sup>48</sup> some of which are of auspicious nature and others of inauspicious nature. Apprehending the possible objection that if It is the doer ultimately great confusion would be caused because there is possibility of Its conferring the fruits of one's actions to another and so on, It is replied that it is not possible. The ground for putting off the objection is provided. Brahman inspires the Jīvas to good or bad actions in accordance with their past Saṁskāras, similarly fruits are bestowed in accordance to their actions—



“तस्माद्भिः सर्वशक्तिः सर्वेश्वरः श्रीपुरुषोत्तमः पूर्वकृतधर्माधर्माद्यनुसारेण धर्मादिकारयिता तदनुरूपफलदाताऽतो जीवस्य कर्तृत्वं परायत्तमिति सिद्धम्।”<sup>49</sup>

Therefore it is established that agency of Jīva is dependent on Brahman.

The individual self is the doer, not only in the bound state but also in the released state.

The fact is evident from the statement of individual soul's being creator of bodies, roaming and sporting *etc.* In released state individual self can create body for itself, roam wherever it likes at will. But here also its agency is derived from Brahman ultimately and it is not independent fully.

The individual soul is not only the agent (कर्त्ता) but also the enjoyer (भोक्ता). In accordance with the work done, good or bad, it enjoys its fruits.<sup>50</sup> Even in the released state, it enjoys the pleasures of Hiraṇyagarbha lokas, but these are not something like materialistic pleasures ; but heavenly pleasures which neither exhaust by enjoyment nor cause them to fall again in the circle of rebirth—

“हिरण्यगर्भादिलोकस्था भोगास्तेऽपि मुक्तानुभवविषयाः।”<sup>51</sup>

The individual soul is eternal. It does not die or take birth. It is the body which falls and which in every birth is obtained again. There is no scriptural passage which declares Jīvātman to undergo birth, death and so on—

“सृष्टिसंहारकालिकात्मजन्मनाशविषयकश्रुत्यभावात्।”<sup>52</sup>

The individual soul is a part or amśa of supreme soul. By amśa, a real part cut off from Brahman, should not be understood.

By amśa, what he means, is Śakti or power of Brahman—

“अंशो हि शक्तिरूपो ग्राह्यः।”<sup>53</sup>

If Jīva be taken as a real part of Brahman, then it would become totally different from Brahman. But as this is not the case i.e. the individual self is both different as well as non-different from Brahman, it is to be taken in the sense of Śakti. As power is different, being a part only, but is non-different too from the powerful. Same is the case with the individual soul. Due to this relation the individual self shares such attributes as being devoid of all sins etc., and it is in bound state that it forgets its real nature. Otherwise it is free and pure by nature.

The size of the individual self is accepted to be atomic (अणुपरिमाणकः).<sup>54</sup> This fact is proved by the fact that it is said to pass out of the body through such openings as eyes etc ; and this is possible only if the individual self is of atomic size. Even the scriptural texts approve this fact, when they describe the individual soul to be the hundredth part of the tip of hair—"बालाग्रभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य" and "आराग्रमात्रः" etc.<sup>55</sup>

Although atomic, it experiences the happiness (सुखं) and sorrow (दुःखं) of the whole of the body. The apparent contradiction involved in the above statement is also clarified by Śrīnivāsācārya. He says that soul, though atomic, experiences the pleasures and pains of body, as a drop of sandal paste, placed on one part of body gladdens the whole body—

“यथा हरिचन्दनबिन्दुर्देहैकदेशस्थः स्वगुणेन सकलदेहाह्लादञ्जनयति,  
तथा जीवोऽपि देहैकदेशस्थः स्वगुणेन कृत्स्नदेहव्यापिसुखादिकमनुभवति।”

Another objection is discarded by Śrīnivāsa in this connection. It may be said, that the experience of pleasures (सुखं) etc. of the whole body by the self cannot be compared to a drop of sandal wood whose existence on one part is visible, while consciousness (चैतन्यः) being present in whole



body, the individual self's existence cannot be declared to be at one particular place<sup>57</sup> in the similar way. To this it is replied that existence of Jīva is only at one place i.e. in the heart and it is through its attribute of knowledge pervading the entire body, that it experiences all kinds of physical and mental experiences. Therefore the simile cited is quite appropriate. It is also illustrated by the rays of gem or lamp which though situated at one corner of room illumines the whole place through the light.<sup>58</sup>

The knowledge though being the very essence of the individual self, its attribute knowledge is said to be all pervading (व्यापकः). This fact has been clarified above.

Śrīnivāsācārya takes great pains to repudiate the doctrine of all pervasiveness (विभुत्ववादः) of the self as held by the other vedāntic school. According to him by accepting individual self to be vibhu, would mean either eternal perception or eternal non-perception on the part of the soul; for the all-pervasive soul must always be in connection with all objects and know them eternally or if it is not, somehow, in connection with them, there is nothing outside it, (because it is vibhu) to bring about such a connection. Moreover, there would result salvation and bondage simultaneously because then the individual self being all pervading will realize its real nature as well as engage in worldly affairs.<sup>59</sup> If the individual self is all pervasive then they should not perform any bad work and so on. Thus this theory would lead to utter confusion and therefore cannot be accepted.

According to Śrīnivāsa, the number of individual self is infinite or in other words, he believes in the plurality of souls. He holds that it would be wrong to identify all these numerous souls with one another or with Brahman.

Śrīnivāsa holds individual souls to be of two kinds, one bound and other released. The former class is engrossed in

circle of transmigration and karma and has forgotten its real nature due to avidyā. While the latter is freed of this circle of rebirth etc. and has realised its real nature.

### **States of Individual Self**

The self has five different states namely, waking, dreaming, sleep, swoon and death. The state of waking has been already described as being knower, doer, enjoyer and so on.

In the dream state also the individual self, is a knower and enjoyer.<sup>60</sup>

While interpreting the word (मायामात्रं) not as illusory but as आश्चर्यमात्रं i.e. being source of all wonders, he holds that Īśvara creates horses etc. of wonderful forms in dreaming state. Here he refutes the view that dream objects are created by Jīva itself. According to him, Jīva cannot be the creator of dream objects because Jīva has no instruments to create it—

“स्वप्नदृशो जीवस्य तूपकरणाद्यभावात्तत् कर्तृत्वम् नोपपद्यते।”<sup>61</sup>

He says that if the Jīva is the creator of these dream objects how can it create such dreams itself, which may indicate the coming auspicious or inauspicious events.<sup>62</sup> Moreover the individual self cannot create these objects because his ‘सत्यसंकल्पत्वं’ etc. attributes disappear in bondage, without which he cannot create while Īśvara being possessed of these guṇas is capable to create.

During the state of dreamlessness the individual self is the enjoyer and the knower, but his knowledge remains hidden, Suṣupti finally takes place in Paramātmān, although first of all it enters in the vein and the pericardium. The individual self awakens also from the Paramātmān because sleeping at one place and rising from another place is not possible.<sup>63</sup>



Apprehending the objection that if individual self sleeps in supreme self, then it being above of all limitations becomes a different person and therefore wouldn't remember anything;<sup>64</sup> the author says that the person who wakes up is the same and not different. This fact is proved from three points. Firstly, he remembers the actions done previously, secondly the Smṛti also supports, and thirdly he remembers, is, affirmed by injunctive texts also—

‘कम्मनुस्मृतिशब्दविधिभ्यो हेतुभ्यः।’<sup>65</sup>

Fourth is the state of swoon. This is mid-way between sleep and dream state and is different from both. From the former, it is distinguished because there is absence of happiness which characterizes the sleeping state and it is distinct from the latter, (dreaming state) because there is absence of consciousness which is existent in dreaming state. It is different from death because in it life and breath remain.<sup>66</sup> Therefore this state cannot be included in any of the remaining states.

Last one is the state of death in which fall of this material body takes place. This state is of two kinds viz. one leading to rebirth and the other leading to liberation. In the first case, the individual self goes to hell, heaven and other higher places to enjoy the fruits of actions and return after exhaustion of fruit of actions. While in the case of the second, there is no return in this world and the soul goes to the world of Brahman.<sup>67</sup>

### **Different Paths of Individual self**

Śrīnivāsācārya while describing the paths of individual self after death, accepts the details given in Chāndogya Upaniṣad and follows it in general.

Individual Souls as already said, are of two kinds—(1) pious workers, and (ii) sinners.



The pious souls, at the time of departure become conjoined with other sense-organs, and is then conjoined with mind. The sense-organs, with mind are joined with vital-air,<sup>68</sup> which in company with individual soul are connected with water,<sup>69</sup> which stands for all the Pañcabhūtas. Then the individual soul accompanied by sense-organs and subtle elements<sup>70</sup> comes out of eyes or any other hole of body. After having come out it follows पितृयानः or path of the manes. There, it first goes to smoke, than night, than dark half of moon (कृष्णपक्षः)<sup>71</sup> then six months of the sun's southern progress (दक्षिणायनं) then world of Manes (पितृलोकः) and then to world of moon (चन्द्रलोकः) respectively. There it enjoys the fruits of his actions and with the fruits of those actions which still remain unfructified in accordance to his karmas<sup>72</sup> it comes down.

While returning to the earth, the individual self becomes similar to the ether, the air, the smoke, the cloud and then as rain, it falls down on earth. After that it grows into herbs and corns,<sup>73</sup> which when eaten by men, is turned into seed, which enters in the womb of woman and takes birth.<sup>74</sup> It should be noted here that it becomes only similar to the ether etc. and does not become actually ether and so on. It remains in ether and others for a very short period, because there is no purpose to remain there for long.<sup>75</sup> It remains for short period in herbs also because there is no purpose to remain there for a long time. It remains for short period in herbs also because these are already occupied by other presiding deities and individual self gets only similarity to the herbs etc.<sup>76</sup>

The sinners i.e. performers of unrighteous actions or those which are forbidden by śāstras, do not follow this path. These souls return to the earth without going to (चन्द्रलोकः) etc.<sup>77</sup> Śrīnivāsa says that these go to third place (तृतीयं स्थानम्) i.e. different from पितृलोकः and चन्द्रलोकः but what is precisely



meant by the third place is not clarified by him.<sup>78</sup> Now he indicates what is the process of departure of the knowers.

The mode of departure of knowers is different from both types of workers, mentioned above. The only similarity between the departure of the two *i.e.* of knowers and performers of righteous actions, being, that after death, sense-organs etc. of knowers also get united with the soul like that of performers of actions.<sup>79</sup> But where as doer of righteous actions depart from one of the openings such as eyes etc., the knower departs through the vein out of the crown of the head, which is manifested to him, by the grace of God, who lightens up the base of the vein at the time of departure.<sup>80</sup> Then through the rays of the sun, it reaches the world of Brahman,<sup>81</sup> from where no return is possible. It leaves the gross body here but the subtle body goes along with it.

It may be noted that as the knower ascends by means of rays of the sun, he would not be able to do so, if he dies at night and hence wouldn't reach the world of Brahman. To this it is replied that the main obstacle of actions being removed, there is no other obstacle in the way. Moreover the rays of the sun are present even at night, it can be evidenced by heat at night.<sup>82</sup> Similarly no obstruction is caused, even if the knower dies when the sun is in दक्षिणायनम्.<sup>83</sup> The waiting of उत्तरायणं by Bhīṣma was only to give emphasis on Dharma and also to depict his power to be capable to die at any time. Thus time does not bring about any obstruction and the knower attains or rather realizes Brahman without facing any hinderance.<sup>84</sup>

### **Acit or Insentient Element**

The third Reality is Acit or non-conscious element. It consists of three elements *i.e.* Prākṛta, Aprākṛta and Kāla.

Prākṛta means those elements which are evolutes of Prakṛti or matter. It is different from Kāla and Aprākṛta—

“तत्र गुणत्रयाश्रयभूतं द्रव्यं प्राकृतं तच्च नित्यं परिणामादिविकारि च  
.....अचेतना परार्था च नित्या सततविक्रिया।”<sup>85</sup>

‘Prākṛta is described as the substratum of three Guṇas and eternal, evolving...insentient, meant for the sake of other (Brahman) and changes always take place in it.’

The three constituents of Prakṛti are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. It is insentient and changes take place in it at all times.<sup>86</sup> It is eternal, but its evolutes such as Mahat and others are ephemeral, guṇas of Prakṛti are the cause for release and bondage of individual soul.

It is also regarded as material cause of the world. Every thing which is created or evolved by Prakṛti is under the sway of Time—

“सर्वमपि प्राकृतं वस्तु कालतन्त्रम्।”<sup>87</sup>

Śrīnivāsācārya like other Vedāntic Philosophers clearly distinguished the Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya school which is capable to evolve independently and Prakṛti of his own school which is solely dependent on Brahman for all of its activities.<sup>88</sup>

The process of creation is given by Śrīnivāsa in the condensed form. From Brahman, ether originates, from ether, air, from air fire and, from fire water and from water the earth originates.<sup>89</sup> At the same time it is pointed out that ultimately, it is Brahman from whom every element springs forth;<sup>90</sup> because no element can produce the other independently.

The process of dissolution is just the reverse, i.e. earth is merged into water, water into air and lastly all merge in to the Lord. Similarly Tanmātras, sense-organs, mind and Buddhi etc. originate from Him and merge in Him finally.<sup>91</sup>

He accepts the doctrine of ‘त्रिवृत्करणं’ of elements, which according to him is another name for ‘पञ्जीकरणं’ quintu-



plication.<sup>92</sup> That is to say, all elements contain the parts of others and it is the preponderance of a particular element which leads to name the element as air, water and so on—

“वैशेष्यात् तद्वादस्तद्वादः।”<sup>93</sup>

Aprākṛta as the name indicates is different from Prakṛti as well as Kāla.

It is also insentient and also called<sup>94</sup> as नित्यविभूतिः *i.e.* eternal mysterious power of Lord, विष्णुपदं *i.e.* the footstep of Viṣṇu, परमव्योम *i.e.* the highest Heaven परमपदं *i.e.* the Highest abode and world of Brahman and so on. It is दिव्यं or divine and full of lustre and it is the place from which after the yogis do not retreat. It is devoid of changes and beyond the power of time. Here the realised souls enjoy themselves.

Kāla is the third insentient Reality, which is said to be eternal and all pervading—

“अथ प्राकृताप्राकृतोभयभिन्नाचेतनद्रव्यविशेषः कालो नित्यो विभुश्च।”<sup>95</sup>

It is without beginning and end. No cognition is possible without time. The notions like past, present, future, simultaneousness, late, soon are due to it. It is the auxiliary cause of creation etc. and the proximate cause of the various notions such as beginning from Paramāṇu to Parārdha. Every thing is controlled by it and although everything is controlled by Kāla, it itself is controlled by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa—

“स च भूतभविष्यद्वर्तमानयुगपच्चिरक्षिप्रादिव्यवहारासाधारणहेतुः, सृष्ट्यादिसहकारी च, परमाण्वादपराद्वावसानव्यवहारासाधारणकारणञ्च।... सर्वमपि प्राकृतं वस्तु कालतन्त्रम्, कालस्य सर्वनियामकत्वेऽपि परमेश्वर-नियम्यत्वमेव।”<sup>96</sup>

### Relation between Brahman. Cit and Acit

Having dealt with Jīva, Brahman and Acit entities, the natural question which remains to be treated, is what is the

relationship between these three Realities namely Brahman, the controller, (नियन्तृ), Jiva the enjoyer (भोक्तृ) and Acit, the object to be enjoyed (भोग्यं).

This relation between Ātman, Brahman and Acit is the pivot around which the philosophy of a particular school revolves and it is the main distinguishing factor too.

As is known, Śrīnivāsācārya names this relation subsisting between the three as Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda or Natural difference cum-non-difference. The word Svābhāvika affixed to this relationship not only distinguishes this school from the rest of the Bhedābheda schools, but also emphasizes one fact, namely the relation indicated here is Svābhāvika or natural, not brought about by any external agency and therefore it cannot be dispensed with. An adventitious relation can be finished away by removing the cause or agency which has brought it, but what is inherent or more appropriately natural cannot be taken away. This fact is brought to the mind of the reader by emphasizing this point time and again by Śrīnivāsācārya. This relation finds full support from scriptural passages as well. There are a number of texts such as—

आत्मा वा अरे! दृष्टव्यः.... and “ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम्।”<sup>97</sup> etc.

which declare difference (भेदः) between Jiva and Brahman. On the other hand there are such passages which propound non-difference (अभेदः) between the two. The existence of these two kind of passages supports the doctrine of Nimbārka school that the relation between Jiva and Brahman is Bhedābheda, if none of these be taken as primary or secondary.

Let us first take up the relation between individual self and Brahman.<sup>98</sup> It is Abhinna or identical to Brahman, on account of its existence, activity etc. being dependent on It.



As is evident from the description of the nature of the Jīva, given above that it is dependent on Brahman in its activities inspite of the fact that it is called agent (कर्त्ता) and so on. Due to its inseparable existence with Brahman it is regarded as non-different from It, Since its nature is different from It, it is said to be bhinna or different from Brahman also. The Jīva is characterized by such attributes as being of limited knowledge (अल्पज्ञः) liable to bondage and release, of atomic size (अणुत्वं) etc., while Brahman is omniscient (सर्वज्ञः), eternally free (नित्यमुक्तः), all pervading (विष्णुः) and of excelling qualities. Due to the individual soul's being different as well as non-different from Brahman, the relation subsisting between the two is Bhinnābhinna—

“तथा शारीरस्योक्तभेदश्रुतिप्रामाण्यात् स्वरूपतो ब्रह्मभिन्नत्वासम्भवाद् ब्रह्मनिरपेक्षस्थितिप्रवृत्त्यभावात् ब्रह्मभिन्नत्वम्।”<sup>99</sup>

The relation is further clarified by Śrīnivāsācārya who says that the individual soul is like a part or aṁśa of Brahman—

“अंशो ह्येषः परस्य।”<sup>100</sup>

The part is to be taken in the sense of śakti and not as real part cut off from the whole. The relation between the two is also equated to that between guṇa and guṇi i.e. attribute and substratum of attribute. And these two clearly indicate what is precisely signified when Jīva is said to be both ahinna as well as Abhinna from Brahman. Guṇa is different from guṇi since it does not constitute guṇi which is different in nature, but being inseparable from guṇi, it is non-different too. A number of other parallel instances have been quoted by Śrīnivāsa.

Earthly modifications namely rubies, diamonds etc. made of the earth, are non-different from it but in nature,

these are different. The same is applicable in the case of tree and leaves, sea and its waves and so on.<sup>101</sup> All these instances point to one fact that the relation between Jīva and Brahman is that of Svābhāvika Bhedābheda. One thing significant to be noted here is that inspite of the relation between Jīva and Brahman being that of part and the whole, still the doṣas of Jīva do not touch It in any way. As the sun illuminates good as well as bad equally,<sup>102</sup> without being touched by the guṇa or doṣa of either of the two. Similarly Brahman is not besmeared by the guṇa or doṣas of the individual soul.

The relation being svābhāvika subsists even in the released state.

### Relation between Acit & Brahman

Similarly the relation between Acit and Brahman is that of difference-cum-non-difference (भेदाभेदौ). The world, the effect, is non-different from Brahman the cause, since its existence and activities are inseparable from It. Just like pitchers etc., have no existence apart from mud, mud alone is their essence, being their cause.<sup>103</sup> But at the same time the effect, the world is also different from its cause, Brahman, the difference being in nature. The effect or the world is consisted of sentient and insentient objects, and is characterized by liability to change and so on.<sup>104</sup> While the cause, Brahman is conscious, immutable and so on. Therefore the relation between the two is also Bhedābheda—

“एवं प्रपञ्चस्यापि चिदचिच्छक्तिमद्ब्रह्मकार्यस्य कारणेन ब्रह्मणा सह स्वाभाविकौ भेदाभेदौ भवतः।”<sup>105</sup>

This relationship is beautifully explained by Śrīnivāsācārya by the illustration of snake and its coil. The serpent is the material cause for its coil. Coil is different from the serpent in nature but at the same time, non-different from it, since it has no separate existence. There coil is dependent



(परतन्त्रम्), pervaded (व्याप्यम्) and the effect (कार्यम्), while the snake is independent (स्वतन्त्रम्), pervader (व्यापकम्) and the cause (कारणम्). The same is true of the relation between Brahman and universe. This universe consisting of Cit and Acit objects is dependent, the pervaded, product and so on, while Brahman is Independent, the pervader and possessed of all kinds of powers and so on—

“तत्र कुण्डलं परतन्त्रं व्याप्यं कार्यञ्च, अहिस्तदपेक्षया स्वतन्त्रो व्यापकः कारणञ्च, अतस्तयोर्भेदः। अहिव्यतिरेकेण कुण्डलस्य स्थिति-प्रवृत्त्यभावात् ततोऽभेदश्च।”<sup>1106</sup>

The relation, as already stated being svābhāvika here also, persists in all times and at all places.

### Criticism of other schools

Śrīnivāsācārya criticizes Sāṃkhya-yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, the four schools of Buddhism *i.e.* Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra, Mādhyamika and the Jaina Philosophy. Different schools of Śaivism and Śākta school are also refuted.

### Liberation the Summum-Bonum of Indian Philosophy

Mokṣa or Liberation is the Summum-Bonum of Indian Philosophy. This is the final end of this beginningless creation and ceaseless entanglements in this worldly life. It is the end, by attaining which there is no return, no sorrow and no involvements—

“अनावृत्तिर्शब्दादनावृत्तिः।”<sup>1107</sup>

This state is characterized by positive bliss, in which when one merges, one knows nothing else and as a matter of fact nothing remains to be known or to be attained.

Although the basic concept of liberation is same, in different systems of Indian philosophies yet the nature of liberation varies from system to system.

Śrīnivāsācārya propounds that Mukti consists of attaining “भगवद् भावः” which is preceded by cessation of bounds of Prakṛti in causal as well as in effected state—

“मुक्तिः कार्यकारणप्रकृतिरूपबन्धनिवृत्तिपूर्विका भगवद्भावापत्तिः।”<sup>1108</sup>

What is precisely indicated by “कार्यकारणप्रकृति रूपबन्धः” is not clear. It is clarified by the later commentator Sundera-bhatta—

“कार्यमत्रस्थूलशरीरम्। कारणं सूक्ष्मशरीरम् तद्रूपायाः प्रकृतिसम्बन्ध एव स्वरूपं यस्य स चासौ प्रतिबन्धश्च, तस्य निवृत्तौ सत्यामित्यर्थः”<sup>1109</sup>

By ‘भगवद्भावः’ Śrīnivāsa understands साधर्म्यं<sup>1110</sup> or similarity. Therefore according to him, Mukti consists in obtaining similarity to Brahman. This is clearly stated by Śrīnivāsa in the Sādhana-Pāda of the Brahmasūtras—

“अनन्तेन ब्रह्मणा श्रीपुरुषोत्तमेन सह साम्यं गच्छति”<sup>1111</sup>

The same idea is indicated by the mantra of Muṇḍako-paniṣad—

“यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम्।

तदा विद्वान् पापपुण्ये विधूय निरंजनः परमं साम्यमुपैति॥”<sup>1112</sup>

This attainment of fruit in the form of obtaining similarity with Brahman takes place after the direct vision of Paramātmān. This realization of Brahman takes place when the seeker follows one or the other sādhanas or means prescribed by the scriptures. By adopting a particular sādhana which suits to one’s temperament, one not only gets the mind purified but becomes competent to realize Brahman. For realization the exhaustion of fruits of प्रारब्धकर्मऽ is also very necessary. Unless and until, प्रारब्धकर्मऽ remain unfructified, realization cannot take place. Then after the exhaustion of fruits of प्रारब्धकर्मऽ etc. one realizes Brahman by Its Grace.



The liberation consists not only in the realization of nature of Brahman but also in the realization of one's real nature—

“प्रत्यगात्मा परं ज्योतिरुपसम्पद्याविर्भावः आविर्भूतापहतपाप्मत्वादिगुण-  
स्वरूपोभवति।”<sup>13</sup>

and its real nature consists of being devoid of all sins etc. In this state the individual self acquires its true nature (स्वाभाविकेन रूपेण) only and no outer attribute gets connected with it. By acquiring, what is meant, is mere realization of one's own self as devoid of sins etc; because it is due to ignorance that it forgets its real qualities and connects itself with the attributes of body etc. In Mokṣa, the veil of ignorance being taken away, its real nature is manifested and its relation to Brahman also becomes evident. The Jīva realizes its Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda relation with Brahman which persists in the released state too.

The fact of attaining similarity (साम्यं) with Brahman points to the same thing. Similarity (साम्यं) also consists of both identity and difference, when there is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference between two things then it is said that there is similarity between the two.

The self becomes similar to Brahman in many ways. On realization self becomes कामचारः i.e. capable to roam every where in accordance to its desires. It can go to the world of Fathers, or world of gods, wherever it likes, this fact indicates the power of determination of the released souls—

“मुक्तस्य संकल्पसामर्थ्यं दर्शयति।”<sup>14</sup>

It can create bodies also, if it likes. Whether it likes to remain incorporeal being or corporeal being in released state, also depends on the will of the released soul.<sup>15</sup> If it possesses

a body, it enjoys varied pleasures as one enjoys in waking state and if it does not have it, then it enjoys all those pleasures as in dreaming state.<sup>116</sup> From the ultimate point of view, however, it draws its powers from Brahman and it is due to Its grace that it can engage in various activities according to its wish.

The size of the individual self remains atomic even in the released state. In regard to this concept an objection is raised that as individual self is atomic in nature even in the released state, how can it enter in a number of bodies simultaneously. This is discarded by saying that it enters a number of bodies by its attribute of knowledge (ज्ञानं). This is, illustrated by the instance of lamp. As a lamp situated at one corner or place, illuminates a number of places by its lustre—

“यथैकत्र स्थितस्य प्रदीपस्य प्रभया धर्मभूतयाऽनेकेषु प्रदेशेष्व-  
वेशस्तद्वत्।”<sup>117</sup>

Another objection raised in this concern, is, that as it is held that at the time of realization, the individual self does not know any thing external, being immersed in bliss, how it can be said to enter other bodies by knowledge—

“परमात्मनं प्राप्तस्य विशेषज्ञानाभाववत्त्वश्रवणादित्यत्राह”<sup>118</sup>

It is also put away by Śrīnivāsa by saying, although Jīva is without any specific knowledge at the time of liberation, yet at released state, it is declared to be all knowing by the scriptures, and therefore it can enter in a number of bodies.

The nature of released self is summed up by him in these words—

“तस्मान्मुक्तस्य परमपुरुषसृष्टशरीराद्युपकरणवत्त्वं यथासंकल्पं  
सशरीरत्वमशरीरत्वं सर्वज्ञत्वञ्च सूपपन्नमिति सिद्धम्।”<sup>119</sup>

In the released state, the individual self has no other ruler(except the Lord) and it becomes its own master—



“अनन्याधिपतिर्भवति।”<sup>1120</sup>

In some aspects, the released self has similarity with Brahman but in other aspects it is also different from It. It remains *Aṇu* in size while *paramātman* is *Vibhu* or all-pervading. As already stated, the essence i.e. atomic nature of *Jīva* does not undergo any alteration. But this atomic nature does not prevent him from enjoying the pleasures of several bodies at one and the same time.

Another prominent difference between the individual self and *Paramātman* consists of the individual self's being incapable to create, maintain or destroy the world. This is the exclusive power of Brahman, it is solemnly declared by both *Śruti* and *Smṛti*—

“जगत्सृष्ट्यादिव्यापारस्तु परब्रह्मण एव।”<sup>1121</sup>

Śrīnivāsācārya does not accept the concept of *Jīvanmukti* as accepted by some of the Vedāntic Schools. He gives his recommendation to *Videhamukti* only. He holds that liberation is possible only when the fruits of actions are exhausted and if these are exhausted, the physical body as a result, falls off. The physical body which is created for the enjoyment of fruits of one's actions stands for bondage itself and therefore when one is released, there is no existence of the physical form. Both cannot co-exist. Therefore, the concept of *Jīvanmukti* cannot be accepted.

### **Ethics**

Ethics, as is well-known means code of conduct. It lays down the path to be followed by those, who are desirous of attaining Ultimate truth. That is why this is equated to *Sādhana*s or means of realization. Ethical values may change with time and place, still what is ultimately good or bad, remains immutable. Therefore, the basic thing remains same i.e. it is by doing what is right and good, ordained by the

scriptures, that helps one to realize Brahman. For realization various paths have been prescribed by various philosophers. The paths have been prescribed by various philosophers. The variety of these sādhanas is meant to meet the demand of diversity in tastes and temperaments of different people.

Śrīnivāsācārya also prescribes a number of sādhanas helpful for a seeker after truth.

Vidyā or knowledge is held to be direct means to realize Brahman—

“पुरुषस्यार्थः प्रयोजनं ब्रह्म भावापत्तिः, अतो विद्यातो भवति।”<sup>1122</sup>

He refutes the view of Jaimini<sup>123</sup> who holds that Vidyā is auxiliary to karma, since all of the upaniṣadic texts declare with one voice that Brahman can be known only through vidyā.

A number of grounds<sup>124</sup> have been provided to prove that neither knowledge is subsidiary to action, nor is it incapable to lead to realization of Brahman. Rather it is the most competent sādhanā to help realization of Brahman—

“श्रीपुरुषोत्तमस्य विद्याया विषयतयोपदेशात् वेदान्तैर्वेद्यत्वेन निरूपितत्वात् विद्यातः पुरुषार्थ इत्येवं बादरायणस्य भगवतो मतम्।”<sup>1125</sup>

It should not be understood that karma or actions are of no avail. Although actions do not lead to salvation when taken up severally, still they go a long way as an auxiliary means for realization of Brahman. The actions, performed in accordance to one's āśrama and varna, without any attachment (अनासक्तः) purify the mind and thus provide scope for the rise of knowledge and hence advancement takes place in the spiritual field.<sup>126</sup>

It cannot be maintained at the same time that knowledge should always be preceded by action or karmas, because in



the case of some, knowledge arises without being preceded by Karma or actions.<sup>127</sup>

Karmas or actions are regarded as बहिरङ्ग साधनऽ or external means for the arise of Vidyā.

Its अन्तरङ्ग साधनऽ or internal means being शमः, दमः etc. Although by purification of mind, concentration is achieved leading to rise of vidyā, yet one should be endowed with śama, dama etc., as these help a lot in the rise of vidyā. These śama, dama etc. though are result of ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कार even then one should be equipped with these sādhanas in general. In short, mere performance of sacrifices etc. alone is not sufficient, but it should be combined with the control of senses etc, i.e. internal means also. While referring to the means for rise of Vidyā, Śrīnivāsācārya discusses whether 'मौनं' is enjoined or not in the passage—

“तस्माद् ब्राह्मणः पाण्डित्यं निर्विद्य बाल्येन तिष्ठासेद् बाल्यञ्च पाण्डित्यञ्च निर्विद्याथ मुनिरमौनं मौनञ्च निर्विद्याथ ब्राह्मणः।”<sup>128</sup>

It has been held that 'मौनं' being non-different from पाण्डित्यं in meaning is not enjoined separately. This point is put aside by Śrīnivāsācārya. He says that मौनं is also enjoined as सहकार्यन्तरविधिः auxiliary means along with पाण्डित्यं and बाल्यं in the above passage. Although 'मौनं' is not enjoined directly still on account of its yielding the sense of प्रकृष्टमननशीलः i.e. one who is habituated of pondering over, which is different from पाण्डित्यं (learning) and बाल्यं (childlike simplicity) ; the word मौनं is to be taken as enjoined upon as auxiliary means along with these two i.e. पाण्डित्यं and बाल्यम्.

In this concern, the persons who are entitled to Brahmanvidyā are also mentioned by him. All those who belong to one or other āśrama or stage of life are befitting persons to acquire Brahmanvidyā.<sup>129</sup>

For those who do not belong to any of the āśrama like widowers and so on, can obtain vidyā or knowledge by muttering mantras, keeping fast and propitiating deities.<sup>130</sup>

It is emphatically declared that one who belongs to one or other āśrama of life is much better than those who do not belong to any āśrama. Because those who belong to one or other āśrama are capable to undertake a number of sādhanas or means meant for realization and knowledge arises in shorter period in their case—

“अतोऽन्तरालवर्तित्वात् इतरदाश्रमवर्तित्वम् बहुविद्यासाधनसम्पत्त्या ज्यायः, अल्पकालेन विद्योत्पादकम्।”<sup>131</sup>

The persons like ‘नैष्ठिकब्रह्मचारिन्ऽ’ if they once fall from their vows due to some mishap or wilful negligence on their part, cannot be entitled to Brahmanvidyā.<sup>132</sup> Then they are not fit to try again for realization of Brahman in that birth. There is no expiation which can purify them. They are turned out of that vow and remain out of it for the rest of their life.

Thus, the person, who belongs to one or other āśrama, who has studied all the other four Vedas along with its auxiliary parts (षडङ्गऽ) with the realization, that fruits of actions are transitory and exhaust by enjoyment and who is desirous of grace of God and hence approaches Him with a heart full of devotion, is the proper seeker of Brahmanvidyā.

“.....कर्मफलादौ जातनिर्वेदेन श्रीभगवद्दर्शनस्य मोक्षासाधारणकरणत्वं श्रुत्वा तज्जन्यव्यवसायजन्यदिदृक्षाग्रहगृहीतेन श्रीपुरुषोत्तमप्रसादैकेप्सुना आचार्यैकदेवेन गुरूपसन्नेन गुरुभक्त्येकहार्देन मुमुक्षणेत्यन्वेति।”<sup>133</sup>

Regarding the time of rise of vidyā, it is said that there is no ‘niyama’ or regularity. It can arise in this very birth or it may arise after a number of births. Whenever all of the



obstructions are removed, vidyā arises. Therefore no definite period can be ascribed—

“प्रतिबन्धे विद्याप्रतिबन्धके देशकालादिविशेषापेक्षे विद्येतरफलोन्मुखे कर्मणि अप्रस्तुते अप्रवृत्ते असतीत्यर्थः।”<sup>134</sup>

Similarly it is maintained that there is no ‘Niyama’ or regularity regarding the attainment of liberation. It can be obtained after the fall of this very physical form, if there are no more prārabdha-karmas to fructify. In the case of the remaining prārabdha-karmas, it can be attained after a number of births too. Because Śrīnivāsācārya maintains that liberation takes place only after the fall of this body which can take place after the exhaustion of fruits of प्रारब्धकर्म by their enjoyment.<sup>135</sup> Dhyāna or meditation is also regarded as helpful for realization of Brahman to a great extent—

“तस्मादुपदेशात् असकृदनुष्ठिते उपासनवेदननिदिध्यासनादिशब्दार्थे ब्रह्मध्याने तदनुग्रहाद्ब्रह्मदर्शनं भवति।”<sup>136</sup>

By practising concentration etc., again and again, Brahman manifests Itself in the dhyāna of the devotee. As a matter of fact upāsana i.e. meditation etc. are very much helpful in fixing one’s pointed attention on Brahman, and resulting in Its realization in course of time.

How one should meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa and in which form, it is also laid down. One should meditate on Him as identical, with his own self. What is meant by identity is also clearly put forth by Śrīnivāsa. One should meditate on Him as identical (तादात्म्य) to one’s ownself. This identity is possible between two objects which are inseparably connected with each other on some point and not between two altogether different objects. Therefore, identity cannot exist between a cow and a horse. It can exist in such objects as that between guṇa and guṇin (i.e. attribute and substratum of attribute), śakti and śaktimān (power and powerful) and so on, in which



one is different as well as non-different from other. Similarly Brahman who though different in nature from Jīva, is inseparably connected with It. Here both Bheda and Abheda hold predominant position—

“इह भेदोऽपि मुख्य अभेदोऽपि मुख्यः, उभयोः स्वाभाविकत्वात्।”<sup>137</sup>

And in this Bhedābheda form which can be said as identical too, one should meditate on Brahman.

The individual soul in bound state should neither be meditated upon nor should the symbol be meditated as Ātman.<sup>138</sup> Mind etc. can be meditated upon as Brahman. But Brahman should not be taken up as mind and so on during concentration.

As far as posture of meditation is concerned, it should be strictly kept in mind that one can meditate in a sitting posture only. Because otherwise the devotee can soon fall prey to sleep etc.<sup>139</sup>

About the place of meditation, there is no fixed rule, wherever one can concentrate one is allowed to sit.<sup>140</sup> But place should be even and pure.<sup>141</sup>

The meditation is to be carried on continuously and upto the time of realization.<sup>142</sup>

Meditation, like knowledge, destroys all fruits of actions, good as well as bad. Both kinds of fruits, good as well as bad are obstructions in the path of realization.<sup>143</sup> Because good and bad actions both yield fruit which binds the person and he has to take birth again to reap their fruits. These are rightly compared to golden and iron chains. Chain binds surely, it is immaterial whether the chain is golden or made of iron. Same is the case with good and bad actions, both are binding.

But meditation cannot destroy those actions which have started to yield fruit. These can be destroyed only after the exhaustion of their fruits.<sup>144</sup>



Lord Kṛṣṇa is to be meditated upon as possessor of essential qualities such as truth, knowledge, bliss, being soul of all, devoid of grossness, atomic nature, sins *etc.*, and of true desires or resolves,<sup>145</sup> which form His real nature. Other external attributes such as joy is his head *etc.* may be included optionally.

Īśvara though all pervading, is said to be अङ्गुष्ठमात्र<sup>146</sup> i.e. of the size of thumb existing in heart for helping concentrations. He is said to be of limited size only to help devotees, otherwise He is unlimited by time or space.

The various kinds of meditations designated as Sāṅdilya-vidyā, Daharavidyā and others which are referred to in various Upaniṣads are really identical. Basic motive underlying all these meditations is same, difference lies in process only.

The symbolic meditations are those which prescribe meditations on symbols such as on Nāme i.e. name *etc.*, these do not help one to realize Brahman.

Bhakti or devotion is also helpful for the manifestation of Brahman. Bhakti stands for intense love towards a particular person or deity *etc.* Bhakti and dhyāna are correlated. Bhakti conjoined with dhyāna leads to salvation—

“संराधने सम्यगाराधने निदिध्यासनलक्षणे भक्तियोगे ब्रह्म व्यक्तमभवति।”<sup>147</sup>

The meaning of manifestation should not be misunderstood here. Although Brahman is present every where still It is said to be manifested to human being by meditation, because It is not visible by these ordinary external eyes, in spite of Its all pervasive presence, it is the meditation which helps to obtain Its glimpse. It is illustrated by Lord Sun's becoming visible to Kunti by the power of mantra.<sup>148</sup>

Thus all these sādhanas, according to Śrīnivāsācārya

are helpful in the realization of Brahman. Another factor which is to be noted here is that the grace of Guru or preceptor also helps a lot in the path of realization.

Thus the Svābhāvika Bhedābheda as expounded by Śrīnivāsācārya in Vedānta-Kaustubha contains a clear cut explanations of preliminary doctrines of the school which can be easily approached by people at large. This system is both theological as well as philosophical.

Śrīnivāsācārya does not engage in dealing with abstract concepts regarding Brahman as dealt with by Śaṅkarācārya. On the other hand he presents his doctrine of Bhedābheda, which reaches the mind directly. The explanation of Bhedābheda relation namely how Bheda and Abheda both are present, is very clear and convincing. His philosophical doctrines being taken up here, his position in Nimbārka Saṁpradāya has been dealt in the Second part of the chapter.

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## PART II

# PLACE OF VEDĀNTA-KAUSTUBHA IN NIMBĀRKA SAMPRADĀYA

Vedānta-Kaustubha of Śrīnivāsācārya occupies a significant or rather unparalleled position in Svābhāvika Bhedābheda school of Nimbārka-cārya. Amongst the four or five works attributed to him, only Vedānta Kaustubha is extant today, and this simplework has raised him to a high place which impressed not only the works of his successors, but also superseded Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha of Nimbārka-cārya in some aspects.

Nimbārka-cārya, the preceptor of Śrīnivāsācārya and the foremost propounder of this school, was preceded by a number of Bhedābheda-vādins;<sup>1</sup> such as Bhāskarācārya, Yādava Prakāśa and Bhartṛprapañca *etc.* Nimbārka-cārya departed from them not only in philosophical concepts but also in the style of writing bhāṣya. He wrote to the point and composed his bhāṣya in a simple language without criticising any of his opponent Vedāntists. His bhāṣya is very concise and every thing is conveyed in a nut-shell without being entangled in unnecessary discussions. Therefore it is very easy to understand his bhāṣya without any aid although a number of concepts of his school remain somewhat obscure, which have been clarified to a great extent by his direct pupil and successor Śrīnivāsācārya in Vedānta-Kaustubha.

Vedānta-Kaustubha, written in accordance to the desire of his preceptor, is an independent bhāṣya on the Brahma-sūtras written for an easy understanding of the philosophy of Nimbārka as found in his bhāṣya.

Śrīnivāsa's treatment of the subject matter is very precise. In comparison to his predecessor, his explanation of the sūtras is more exhaustive and satisfactory. Almost every word in the sūtra, is taken up and explained by him properly; with compounds being dissolved and significance of each word being provided.<sup>2</sup> The explanation of the sūtras is interwoven with a number of illustrations and quotations which render the explanations naturally more vivid and lend support to his doctrine.

Besides the clear cut explanation of the sūtras, another peculiarity of his bhāṣya, is to give a clear idea regarding the basic concepts of Nimbārka school, which are not, clear in Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha. He has defined those concepts so properly, that these definitions are not only accepted by his successors but even quoted as authoritative texts in their commentaries as would be obvious later on.<sup>3</sup>

While expounding the supreme Reality Brahman, he also expounds the other two Realities *i.e.* Cit and Acit with a commendable clarity and precision, so by inculcating all the necessary elements Cit is explained as :

“तत्राचिद्वर्गभिन्नो ज्ञानस्वरूपो ज्ञातृत्वकर्तृत्वत्वादिधर्मकोऽहमर्थरूपो भगवदायत्तस्वरूपस्थितिप्रवृत्तिकोऽणुपरिमाणकः प्रतिशरीरं भिन्नो बन्धमोक्षार्ह-  
श्चित्पदार्थः।”<sup>4</sup>

This includes almost all the necessary distinguishing characteristics of 'Cit' & the definition is devoid of such doṣas as अतिव्याप्तिः, अव्याप्ति and अभावः as it ought to be. It clearly states that 'Cit' or Jiva is different from 'Acit'; knowledge, constitutes its very nature. It is characterized by such attributes as ज्ञातृत्वं *i.e.* being knower etc., and is of the form of the object of the concept of 'I'. Its activities and maintenance is dependent on Īśvara, it is of atomic size,



different in each body and liable to bondage and salvation. This presents correct idea regarding what constitutes 'Cit'.

Similarly 'Acit' is explained. 'Acit' is constituted of three elements viz. Prākṛta, Aprākṛta and Kāla—

“प्राकृताप्राकृतकालभेदात्।”

What is meant by प्राकृतः, अप्राकृतः and कालः is also pointed out<sup>2</sup>—

“तत्र गुणत्रयाश्रयभूतं द्रव्यं प्राकृतं, तच्च नित्यं परिणामादिविकारि च। .... महदादिब्रह्माण्डान्तस्य जगतः कारणीभूतञ्च तत्कार्यं चानित्यं बोध्यम्।”

“अथाप्राकृतं नाम त्रिगुणप्रकृतिकालात्यन्तभिन्नमचेतनञ्च प्रकृतिमण्डल-भिन्नदेशवृत्तिनित्यविभूतिविष्णुपदपरमपदब्रह्मलोकादिपदाभिधेयम्।”

“सर्वमपि प्राकृतं वस्तु कालतन्त्रम्, कालस्य सर्वनियामकत्वेऽपि परमेश्वरनियम्यत्वमेव।”

All these clearly prove the statement made above.

Another significant thing, passed over by Nimbārka-cārya, is, in what sense Brahman is the material cause as well as the instrumental cause of the universe. Here also it is the Vedānta-Kaustubha which comes for the help of the reader. This significant concept would have been left obscure, but for the interpretation in the Vedānta-Kaustubha.

Moreover, what is basically conveyed by Bhedābheda relation between individual soul and Supreme soul can be comprehended from Vedānta-Kaustubha only where in, it is dealt with exhaustively. He states clearly that the Jīva is different from Brahman because, it is different in nature, the former being of atomic size, limited knowledge and so on, while the latter is of vibhu parimāṇa and unlimited knowledge etc. At the same time 'Cit' is non-different from It, because its existence, maintenance and activities etc. are



all dependent on It.<sup>2</sup> The relation is Svābhāvika or natural and therefore subsists at all places and at all times. Same is true of the relation existing between Brahman and universe.

The simile of serpent and its coil is elaborated beautifully which presents relation in a very natural way.<sup>9</sup> The whole gist of the relation is pointed in this connection by him.<sup>10</sup> Thus some of the very fundamental concepts of this school were properly explained by him and therefore he rendered a sound metaphysical background to his school, indirectly.

His presentation of Siddhāntapakṣa after Pūrvapakṣa is not a new thing in Indian philosophy, yet simplicity and clarity in treatment is what is remarkable and praiseworthy.

Another striking peculiarity of his style is his language. The bhāṣya is written in a pleasing style. The intended meaning is conveyed in fluent language which is interspersed with all necessary discussions and elaborations. No where does artificiality or ambiguity of expression creep into his bhāṣya even from the back door. Unnecessary complicated expressions and cumbrous constructions are strictly avoided. His style and language can be a model and it is most befitting to explain philosophical concepts. Philosophical ideas, being difficult to comprehend; if conveyed in complicated style would strain the mind of the reader even more. Therefore this kind of style is placed at an arm's length by him.

Thus Śrīnivāsācārya's position and that of Vedānta-Kaustubha as well is very significant and this significance is increased still more from the study of the later bhāṣyas of this school. Śrīnivāsa's Vedānta-Kaustubha has exercised an influence to a great extent on his successors. The works of Sundara Bhatta, Devācārya, Puruṣottama Dās and Keśava Kāśmīri Bhatta who wrote commentary on it show their indebtedness to Vedānta-Kaustubha.



Devācārya in Siddhāntajāhnavi refers to Vedānta-Kaustubha very often and quotes it on significant points, such as while describing Brahman as the material cause (उपादान कारणं) and the efficient cause (निमित्त कारणं) of universe<sup>12</sup> and when Cit, and Acit realities are expounded.<sup>12</sup> Thus the bhāṣya of Śrīnivāsācārya is taken as authoritative on such important aspects although other minor details are added by the successors here and there. While explaining the Bhedābheda relation between Brahman and world, Keśava Kāśmīri Bhatta points out one thing, which is implied in Vedānta-Kaustubha, in the illustration of serpent and its coil.<sup>13</sup> Coil is present in subtle form even when the serpent is in 'लम्बायमानावस्था' because a thing altogether non-existent previously cannot be brought into existence by any means. Similarly the universe is always existent, though in subtle invisible form in Brahman and becomes visible by attaining gross form at the time of creation.

Similarly the nature of मोक्षः is described by Śrīnivāsācārya as—

“मुक्तिः कार्यकारणप्रकृतिरूपबन्धनिवृत्तिपूर्विका भगवद्भावापत्तिः।”<sup>14</sup>

But what is meant by—“कार्यकारणप्रकृतिरूपबन्धः” is not clarified by him and this concept is clarified by Devācārya as—

“कार्यमत्र स्थूलशरीरम् कारणं सूक्ष्मशरीरम् तद्रूपायाः प्रकृतेः सम्बन्ध एव स्वरूपं यस्य स चासौ प्रतिबन्धश्च, तस्य निवृत्तौ सत्यामित्यर्थः।”

According to Śrīnivāsācārya attainment of Bhagvadbhāva is preceded by the destruction or exhaustion of bondage in the form of Prakṛti in the causal & effected states. What is meant by, Prakṛti in the causal state and Prakṛti in the effected state is explained by Devācārya. According to him, by 'Kāryarūpa' is implied the gross body and by 'Kāraṇarūpa'



subtle body. Therefore the 'Bhagvadbhāvāpatti' takes place when the bondage consisting of the individual soul's relation with Prakṛti in the causal as well as in the effected state terminates. Some souls remain in the causal state of Prakṛti, being released of the effected state, but that state is also bound state and when the self comes out of even that state then only it gets realization. In other words when the self, not only gets rid of this corporeal existence, but also of all kinds of vāsanās or latent impressions, then and only then its fetters are broken and it realizes its nature.

Another departure from Nimbārka is that Śrīnivāsācārya mentions only Kṛṣṇa instead of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vedānta-Kaustubha. Nimbārka always mentions Kṛṣṇa along with Rādhā as Ramākānta—Rādhā Vallabha etc. Puruṣottama, Paramātmān, Vāsudeva etc. epithets are common to both. Śrīnivāsa nowhere mentions them together. Is Rādhā implied? Or he did not think it necessary to mention it along with Kṛṣṇa is not certain. While the later commentators refer to both Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa unitedly and Kṛṣṇa separately too.

Śrīnivāsācārya kept the tradition of his preceptor in not criticizing any of his vedāntic opponents in the bhāṣya but his successors departed from this tradition. All of the later philosophers not only defend their school against the attacks of opponents but attack and condemn other schools. Every thing has two sides and obviously the absence of so called short coming of Śrīnivāsācārya, has made these commentaries comparatively not so easy to be followed.

Thus the bhāṣya of Śrīnivāsa occupies a very high status in Nimbārka Saṁpradāya both due to its precise treatment of the subject-matter, grasp of the facts and clarity of expression. Though it is not as scholarly, as written by other Bhāṣyakāras such as, Vācaspati Miśra etc., still it has its unique nature and place amongst the Bhāṣyas of the Brahma-



Sūtras. Its influence on the posterior commentators is far reaching and for a person desirous to understand Nimbārka-philosophy, its study is inseparable.

### REFERENCES

1. For details, see on Chap. II. p. 25 onwards.
2. V.K. 1.1.1, 1.1.3-4 etc., or any significant Sūtra can be taken up as its illustration.
3. D.S.S. and S.J. on 1.1.1-2, pp. 86-121.
4. V.K. 1.1.1, p. 7.
5. Ibid., 1.1.1, p. 8.
6. Ibid., 1.1.1, pp. 9-10.
7. Ibid., 1.1.2; V.P.S., pp. 12-13.
8. V.K., 1.2.21, 4.1.13, p. 87 etc.
9. For details, see on Chap. III. p. 89.
10. V.K., 3.2.27, pp. 289-90.
11. D.S.J., 1.1.2, p. 121.
12. Ibid., 1.1.1, p. 86 etc.
13. V.K., 3.2.27.
14. Ibid., 1.1.1., p. 6.
15. D.S.J., 1.1.4, p. 172.

## CHAPTER IV

# COMPARISON WITH OTHER VEDĀNTIC SCHOOLS

Here we take up the comparative study of Śrīnivāsa's Philosophy as contained in Vedānta-Kaustubha with the other Vedāntic systems. As we know, these systems differ from each other on vital points, still the basic concepts of Indian Philosophy being the same the comparative study helps to bring out the difference and non-difference between the two systems more vividly.

### Śaṅkarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya

First of all, we take into consideration the Advaitavāda of Śaṅkara and Bhedābheda-vāda of Śrīnivāsa.

Both Śaṅkara and Śrīnivāsa admit Brahman to be the ultimate Reality, who is the efficient as well as the material cause of the world, but both stand apart in the sense in which Brahman is the efficient as well as the material cause.

Śrīnivāsa contends that Brahman is the efficient cause in the sense that it conjoins the individual souls with the fruits of their actions.<sup>1</sup> The individual souls themselves being incapable to recollect the impressions of past births due to the working of endless circle of actions.<sup>2</sup>

Brahman's being the material cause, consists of transforming the powers called Parā and Aparā existing in it in subtle form into gross form. These powers exist in it in the relation of śakti and śaktimān i.e. that between the power and the powerful.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, Śaṅkara holds that Brahman is



nimitta or efficient cause of the world because only a sentient being can be the cause of the universe and not insentient like Prakṛti etc—

“चेतनं ब्रह्म जगतः कारणं प्रकृतिश्चेति स्थितम्।  
निमित्तत्वं त्वधिष्ठात्रन्तराभावादधिगन्तव्यम्॥”<sup>4</sup>

Conscious Brahman is the efficient and the material cause of the universe. It is operative cause because there is no other controller of this universe except It.

It is the material cause of the universe in the form of Īśvara i.e. Brahman accompanied with Māyā. In other words, Brahman is devoid of all kinds of changes and it is through Māyā that it appears to be the material cause of this universe.<sup>5</sup>

As is evident from the concept of Brahman given above, Śrīnivāsa propounds that the world is ‘Pariṇāma’ or real transformation of Brahman. It is illustrated by the instance of milk changing into curd and so on. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, gives acceptance to ‘Vivartavāda’ or doctrine of apparent transformation. Brahman appears to be the universe due to Māyā, as rope appears to be snake due to darkness.

Both accept that kārya or effect is non-different from cause.<sup>6</sup> But Śaṅkara in accordance to ‘Vivartavāda’ states in the interpretation of the sūtra (2.1.4) that Brahman being the cause of everything, the effect i.e. the universe has no existence apart from Brahman and by knowing It everything else becomes known. Just as by knowing the clay or earth, everything made of the earth becomes known—

“यतो वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं वाचैव केवलमस्तीत्यारभ्यते,  
विकारो घटः शराव उदञ्चनं चेति। न तु वस्तुवृत्तेन विकारो नाम कश्चिदस्ति।  
नामधेयमात्रं ह्येतदनृतं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यमिति। एष ब्रह्मणो दृष्टान्त आम्नातः।  
तत्र श्रुताद्वाचारम्भणशब्दादार्ष्टान्तिकेऽपि ब्रह्मव्यतिरेकेण कार्यजातस्याभाव इति  
गम्यते।”

“And hence it is said that, an effect, is merely a name, made current by speech, and its existence as effect; is because of speech only. The effect viz. a jar or a trough or a water pot is not in existence substantially as an effect as much, but is merely a name and is false or untrue and that it is merely earth only, is the truth. This is stated as an illustration of Brahman. Therefore, because of the word ‘Ārambhaṇa’ occurring in the scriptures, it is understood that, in the case of the thing illustrated also; all creation as a class as such has no existence apart from Brahman.”

According to Śrīnivāsa, in this sūtra, the view of Vaiśeṣika School is refuted,<sup>8</sup> which holds that there is difference between the cause and the effect. And therefore according to him, this universe which is consisted of animate and inanimate beings is non-different from Brahman, the Parama or the Highest cause, who possesses Cit and Acit as its powers—

“तस्मात् परमकारणाच्चिदचिच्छक्तिमतोऽपरिच्छिन्नादेकाद्वितीयादिशब्दार्थात् कारणावस्थया कार्यावस्थया च स्वेच्छयैव स्थातुं समर्थात् सर्वप्रपञ्चपूर्ववर्तिनो ब्रह्मणः सकाशाच्चिदचिद्रूपस्य परिच्छिन्नस्यानेकनामरूपस्य परतन्त्रस्य कार्यस्यानन्यत्वम्।”

The effect, dependent and limited, consisting of Cit and Acit, is non-different from Brahman, the Highest Cause, possessing Cit and Acit (in subtle form) as Its powers, capable to exist as the cause and effect by Its own free will, and who is unlimited as is indicated by the words ‘one’, ‘unparalleled’ and so on.

Therefore what is to be stressed upon in this sūtra is this, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa changes itself into effected form by his own desire without being inspired or compelled by any outer means. What differentiates Śrīnivāsa from Śaṅkara is that, the former maintains the reality of effect different from



Brahman too; while the latter regards world as real only when it is non-different from It and not as separate reality. Because as is evident from above, Śaṅkara regards the world as mere 'Vivarta' i.e. apparently evolved and therefore it is not real. As pitchers etc. modifications (Vikāra) of clay are not real, only forms changed apparently. Ultimately these are non-different from clay which alone is real (मृत्तिकेत्येव). In the same way Brahman alone is real, world which is ultimately non-different from it is also unreal. Therefore Śaṅkara propounds Vivartavāda. While Śrīnivāsa regards the world as real as Brahman, which is evolved out of Śakti or power called Acit and Brahman.

From the study of the Brahmasūtras, we do not find support to the view point of Śaṅkara. The sūtra 'तदनन्यत्व-मारम्भणः'—merely states, that the world is non-different from Brahman and no where is it stated that it is Real only when non-different from It and unreal when it is different from It. Here it is also pointed out that the evolution of world from it is a mere appearance and in reality there is no transfiguration and so on. In 'जन्मादास्य यतः' it is maintained that the universe actually comes out of Brahman. Therefore we cannot say that the creation of world is mere appearance or Vivarta but it is a real change or 'Parīṇāma'.

Śrīnivāsa describes Brahman as omnipresent, omniscient, Lord of all and so on—

“..... सर्वज्ञः, सर्वशक्तिः, सर्वेश्वरः, सर्वकारणरूपः, समानातिशयशून्यः, सर्वव्यापकः, सर्ववेदैकवेद्यः श्रीकृष्ण एव ब्रूहि ब्रूयति तस्मादुच्यते परं ब्रह्म।”<sup>10</sup>

and according to him, Śrī Kṛṣṇa known as Vāsudeva Puruṣottama etc., is Brahman, the Highest Reality.

On the contrary Śaṅkara holds that सर्वज्ञत्वं and सर्वशक्तित्वं

etc. guṇas donot belong to Brahman ultimately. When Brahman is conditioned by Māyā then as Īśvara, it appears to possess these attributes—

“तदेवमविद्यात्मकोपाधिपरिच्छेदापेक्ष्यमेवेश्वरस्येश्वरत्वं सर्वज्ञत्वं सर्वशक्तित्वञ्च न परमार्थतो.....।”<sup>11</sup>

In Reality Brahman is Nirguṇa or attributeless—

“निराकारमेव ब्रह्म अवधारयितव्यम् and समस्तविशेषरहितं निर्विकल्पकमेव ब्रह्म प्रतिपत्तव्यम् न तद्विपरीतम्।”<sup>12</sup>

The scriptural passages which declares it as Saguṇa or possessor of attributes are only for the purpose of helping concentration—

“उपासनाविधि प्रधानानि हि तानि।”<sup>13</sup>

Saguṇa Brahman according to Śaṅkara is lower (अपर) in status. While Śrīnivāsa holds Brahman to be endowed with all these attributes in its ultimate form and according to him the scriptural texts which state It to be ‘Nirguṇa’ and ‘Nirākāra’ only declare it to be devoid of only inauspicious qualities and form. Or in other words virtue, vice etc. being relative terms donot touch It ultimately.<sup>14</sup>

The view point of Śaṅkara does not seem to be correct. In the very first sūtra, he himself says that सर्वज्ञत्वं etc. attributes of Brahman follow from the meaning of the root Brh. itself—

“अस्ति तावद्ब्रह्म नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभावं, सर्वज्ञं, सर्वशक्तिसमन्वितम्। ब्रह्मशब्दस्य हि व्युत्पाद्यमानस्य नित्यशुद्धत्वादयोऽर्थाः प्रतीयन्ते, बृहतेर्धा-  
तोरर्थानुगमात्।”<sup>15</sup>

Therefore it seems self-contradictory on his part when he later on states that these attributes belong to the lower Brahman i.e. Īśvara.

Moreover the teachings of the Brahmasūtras seem to be



otherwise. The sūtras—‘जन्माद्यस्य यतः’ and ‘तत्तु समन्वयात्’<sup>16</sup> clearly declare Brahman who is all intelligent and so on to be the cause of the world. Again the sūtras<sup>17</sup> state It to be possessed of bliss (आनन्दः) and other attributes. Other sūtras such as ‘सर्वोपेताश्च सा तद्दर्शनात्’<sup>18</sup> characterise It with all powers such as omnipotence, omniscience etc. Therefore all these sūtras point to the fact that Brahman is not Nirguṇa. The sūtras (3.11-30) on which Śaṅkara bases his point of view that Nirguṇa Brahman is the Highest cannot be accepted, because in the sūtra ‘अरूपवदेव हि तत्प्रधानानि’ the word ‘अरूपवत्’ may denote Brahman to be devoid of all material and inauspicious qualities as interpreted by Śrīnivāsa—

“रूपाणि नामसहितानि देवदेहादीनि जीवकर्मानुसारिब्रह्मकृतानि भोग्यत्वेन न विद्यन्ते अस्य अतोऽरूपवदेव ब्रह्म नामरूपयोर्व्याकरणे स्वभोगार्थं नैव प्रवर्तते इत्यर्थः, आप्तकामत्वात्। हिशब्दः प्राकृतनामरूपनिबन्धनानां सर्वेषां दोषाणां ब्रह्मण्यभावं सूचयति।”<sup>19</sup>

Śaṅkara and Śrīnivāsa both accept śāstra as pramāṇa. But again in case of Śaṅkara a difficulty arises. According to Śaṅkara, from the pāramārthika point of view all kind of proofs including śāstras are unreal—

“तस्मादविद्यावद्विषयाण्येव प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणानि शास्त्राणि च।”<sup>20</sup>

“If it is accepted, how can the unreal śāstras give any information about Brahman which is Real. Then how śāstra can be said as yoni of Brahman and so on, against this objection Śaṅkara points out that śāstras are said to be ‘yoni’ of Brahman in the sense, that these remove the ‘Bheda’ or sense of difference caused by avidyā—

“अविषयत्वं ब्रह्मणः शास्त्रयोनित्वानुपपत्तिरिति चेत्। न अविद्या-कल्पितभेदनिवृत्तिपरत्वाच्छास्त्रस्य।”<sup>21</sup>

But this clarification does not appear to be much

convincing because the scriptures, undoubtedly, help to remove several misapprehensions, and at the same time these give clue about Brahman's real nature too.

Both Śaṅkara and Śrīnivāsa hold that Jīva or individual soul is eternal and immortal, but whereas Śaṅkara holds that Jīva is eternal because it is non-different from Brahman, here Śrīnivāsācārya points out that Jīva is really eternal, immutable<sup>22</sup> and a separate entity.

According to Śaṅkara the nature of individual is pure consciousness—

“ज्ञो नित्यचैतन्योऽयमात्मा अतएव यस्मादेव नोत्पद्यते परमेव ब्रह्मा-  
विकृतमुपाधिसंपर्काज्जीवभावेनावतिष्ठते।”<sup>23</sup>

Śrīnivāsācārya points out its nature as—

“जीवात्मा ज्ञ एव ज्ञानस्वरूपत्वे सति ज्ञातृत्ववानेव।”<sup>24</sup>

i.e. individual self is not only pure consciousness but also knower and this view appears more correct because knowledge cannot subsist without its substratum i.e. knower.

Śrīnivāsācārya contends that the size of individual soul is atomic (अणुपरिमाणः) as even in the scriptures it is stated to be आराग्रमात्रः and so on. As a drop of sandal ointment situated on one part of body pleases the whole of the body, in the same way the ‘aṇu’ Jīva existing in ‘hṛdaya’ the seat of Jīva, receives the experience of the whole body.<sup>25</sup> Individual soul is sometimes called vibhu due to its attribute i.e. knowledge being all pervading and this attribute exists upto the existence of the soul; which being eternal, the attribute is also eternal. In reality it is aṇu—

“... जीवोऽणुपरिमाणको गुणेन विभु रितिविशेषः।”<sup>26</sup>

Ācārya Śaṅkara holds on the other hand that Jīva is vibhu being similar to Brahman;<sup>27</sup> and the Jīva is called aṇu



only due to the superimposition of the qualities of the buddhi. But his view does not seem to be correct because context does not support the interpretation given by Śaṅkarācārya. Not only in the Sūtra—"तद्गुणसारत्वात् तद्व्यपदेशः प्राज्ञवत्" he takes 'तद्' to stand for Buddhi but even in the sūtra 'यावदात्मभावित्वाच्च न दोषस्तद्दर्शनात्' 'Ātman' is taken as Buddhi, which is not its usual sense. What is expressed in this sūtra is, that the knowledge which is the attribute of the individual soul exists up to its existence and the self being eternal, the attribute is also eternal and that is why individual soul is very often designated by its essential quality namely knowledge.

Moreover as held by A.K. Guha—"It is inconceivable how unconscious Buddhi can have such power."<sup>28</sup> Because Śaṅkara has ascribed Buddhi to be endowed with such qualities as इच्छा (desire) द्वेषः (envy) दुःखं (sorrow) and सुखं (happiness) etc.<sup>29</sup> which Buddhi being जडा cannot have. On these grounds we think that the doctrine of Śaṅkara that the individual soul is vibhu or all pervading is not correct. The acceptance of the all pervasiveness of the soul will also cause it to be liable to the fault of either perpetual liberation or perpetual bondage or perpetual liberation and bondage simultaneously, which fault cannot be removed even by accepting the admission of antahkaraṇa. This is clearly brought out by Śrīnivāsācārya.<sup>30</sup>

Śrīnivāsācārya accepts Jīvas to be innumerable, being different in different bodies. But Śaṅkarācārya holds that soul is one and it is not liable to the sorrows and happiness simultaneously because it is conditioned by upādhis such as body, impressions etc. which differ from one and another. Therefore each Jīva limited by particular upādhis cannot have connection with other Jīvas limited by the different upādhis—

“उपाधि तन्नो हि जीव इत्युक्तम् उपाध्यसंतानाच्च नास्ति जीव-  
सन्तानः।”<sup>131</sup>

Ācārya Śaṅkara, contends that individual soul is non-different from Brahman ultimately. It is only due to upādhis that it appears to be different and as doer, enjoyer and so on. In consonance to this doctrine Śaṅkara interprets word ‘अंशः’ as ‘अंश इव’ of the sūtra—

“अंशो नानाव्यपदेशादन्यथा चापि दाशकितवादित्वमधीयत एके।”<sup>132</sup>

i.e. individual soul is as if a part of Brahman, as a spark is a part of Jīva. As heat is common to both fire and the spark, similarly consciousness (Caitanya) is common between the self and the Brahman. In empirical state there is non-difference between the two as both are चैतन्य, but different too, as Brahman is free and self conditioned. There being both difference and non-difference between Jīva and the highest Lord, the Jīva is to be viewed as a part of the lord—

“चैतन्यं चाऽविशिष्टं जीवेश्वरयोर्यथाऽग्निविस्फुलिङ्गयोरौष्ण्यम्। अतो भेदाऽभेदाऽवगमाभ्यामंशत्वाऽवगमः।”<sup>133</sup>

Śrīnivāsa also holds that individual soul is a part of Brahman, but in the sense of śakti or power as the rays are part of the sun and this fact is supported by following sūtras too.<sup>34</sup> He further points out on the basis of scriptural texts declaring individual selves to be different as well as non-different from Brahman and that the relation between the two is that of Bhedābheda i.e. difference cum non-difference ultimately. This relation subsists not only in the state of bondage but also in the released state. The individual soul is non-different from Brahman, as its existence, activities *etc.*, are dependent on Brahman and it is different because it is characterized by attributes such as possessed of limited knowledge *etc.*, which is in contradiction to the nature of



Brahman, endowed with such attributes as of unlimited knowledge, all pervasiveness and so on. This relation is Svābhāvika or natural and not brought about by any upādhi or condition, on the removal of which it might be ended or exhausted. This is illustrated by the relation existing between the tree and its leaves, the sea and its ripples etc.<sup>35</sup>

Śaṅkarācārya also propounds Pratibimbavāda.<sup>36</sup> He holds that the individual souls are Pratibimba or reflections of Paramātmān, as in water there is reflection of the sun etc. But in view of the sūtra (2.3.43) wherein the Jīva is a part of Brahman, the above theory seems contradictory. It is also not clear how 'Nirguṇa' Brahman can have reflection which is possible only in the case of qualified object.

Naturally Śaṅkarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya differ regarding the relation between Brahman and the world also. Śrīnivāsa propounds that the relation is Svābhāvika here also.<sup>37</sup> While Śaṅkara contends that world is non-different from Brhman.<sup>38</sup> But whereas Śrīnivāsa regards the world to be as real as Brahman and categorises it as third Reality known as Acit, there Śaṅkara holds that world is unreal or false as different from Brahman. But how can there be unity or non-difference between cause and effect *i.e.* Brahman and the universe, if one of them is false or non-existent? This is pointed out by Rāmānuja very aptly in his Śrībhāṣya.<sup>39</sup>

Both join hands in accepting that Brahman is not touched by the guṇas and doṣas of the world, just as the products of earth when dissolved into earth do not defile it with their individual doṣas or guṇas.<sup>40</sup>

Śaṅkarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya, both hold divergent views not only on the point of the relation of world, Brahman and individual soul but on the nature of Liberation also. Both agree on the fact that realization of Brahman is the

only means for ending or terminating the unending circle of transmigration, sorrow, happiness and so on. According to both Mokṣa is neither उत्पाद्यः (to be produced), संस्कार्यः (to be refined) nor विकार्यः (to be modified)<sup>41</sup> but it is the natural state of individual soul on the realization of which, Jīva is liberated.

According to Śaṅkara, the realizer of Brahman becomes Brahman himself—“ब्रह्मैव हि मुक्त्यवस्था”.<sup>42</sup> At this state the individual soul freed of all limitations, is united with the Highest Soul—

“अविभक्त एव परेणऽऽत्मना मुक्तोऽवतिष्ठते।”<sup>43</sup>

It is illustrated by the instance of pure water merging in pure water becomes like that as is quoted by Śaṅkara—

यथोदकं शुद्धे शुद्धमासिक्तं तादृगेव भवति।

एवं मुनेर्विजानत आत्मा भवति गौतमः॥”<sup>44</sup>

Śrīnivāsa contends that the realization of Brahman is becoming similar to It (ब्रह्मसाम्यापत्तिः)—अनन्तेन ब्रह्मणा श्रीपुरुषोत्तमेन सह साम्यं पश्यति।<sup>45</sup>

As the term ‘साम्यं’ indicates, there remains difference and non-difference between two objects, i.e. when there is similarity in some aspect and dissimilarity in the other aspect. Same is the case in the released state, the Jīva is in relation of difference and non-difference to Brahman.

Ācārya Śaṅkara propounds Jīvanmukti i.e. realization of Brahman in this very life. To put it in other words, the soul is liberated in this very body but his body continues even after this, for sometimes, as the wheel of potter goes on revolving for some time after the stop of work. He also accepts क्रममुक्तिः or gradual liberation,<sup>46</sup> as well as Videha-mukti of liberation after fall of body.



Śrīnivāsa does not recommend Jīvamukti and gives his consent for Videhamukti only i.e. one is liberated only after the fall of the physical body even if realization has taken place.

As to the method of realization of Brahman, the two Ācāryas hold that tarka or reasoning alone cannot lead to knowledge of supersensible objects, Śāstras are the only means for that purpose. But as is evident from the interpretations of the word 'संराधने' in the sūtra "अपि संराधने प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्यां" Śaṅkara considers meditation or abstract concentration as the means of the attainment of Brahman—

“भक्तिध्यानप्रणिधानाद्यनुष्ठानम्”<sup>47</sup>

While Śrīnivāsa regards loving devotion or meditation, as the right means—

“संराधने सम्यगाराधने निदि ध्यासनलक्षणे भक्तियोगे ब्रह्म व्यक्तम्भवति।”

Śaṅkarācārya gives emphasis on Jñāna or knowledge in preference to 'Karma' or action—

“तस्माज्ज्ञानमेकं मुक्त्वा क्रियायाः गन्धमात्रस्याप्यनुप्रवेशो इह नोपपद्यते।”<sup>48</sup>

'Karma' performed according to one's varṇa and āśrama are auxiliary to the purification of heart only.

Unlike Śaṅkara, Śrīnivāsa prefers the synthesis of Jñāna i.e. knowledge and 'Karma' or action and does not show special adherence to either of these two.

**Conclusion—**From the comparative study, done above it is evident that both Śaṅkara and Śrīnivāsācārya stand apart on some of the major points of Indian Philosophy such as nature of Brahman, individual soul, their mutual relation, concept of Mokṣa and so on and there is no possibility of compromise between the two. One emphasizes on the absolute

Non-dualism and the other lays equal stress on Non-Dualism and dualism both. The Advaita of Śaṅkara is more Idealistic, while Bhedābheda of Śrīnivāsa is more realistic and easily accessible to common people.

### Bhāskarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya

Bhāskarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya both propound Bhedābheda-vāda. The doctrine of the former being known as Aupādhika Bhedābheda and that of latter as Svābhāvika Bhedābheda.

Both hold Brahman, the Highest Reality to be the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. They agree that upādānatva or material cause-hood of Brahman consists in the transformation of powers existing in Brahman into gross forms.

As a necessary corollary to the above concept is, their acceptance of pariṇāmavāda or theory of transformation. Bhāskarācārya points out clearly that 'Pariṇāmavāda' is characterized by manifestation of inherent subtle powers into gross form—'शक्तिविशेषलक्षणः परिणामः।'<sup>49</sup> It is emphatically stated that Brahman transforms its powers without any extraneous means because it is but Its nature—

'ब्रह्म स्वत एव परिणमते तत्स्वाभाव्यात्।'<sup>50</sup> The powers which get transformed are specified as भोग्यशक्तिः and भोक्तृशक्तिः—

".....ईश्वरस्य द्वे शक्ती भवतो भोग्यशक्तिरेका भोक्तृशक्तिश्चापरा-  
भोग्यशक्तिश्च साकाशादिरूपेणाचेतनपरिणामापत्तेर्भोक्तृशक्तिः सा चेतना  
जीवरूपेणावतिष्ठते।'<sup>51</sup>

That is to say these भोग्यशक्तिः and भोक्तृशक्तिः are transformed into inanimate and animate beings respectively. These correspond to Parā and Aparā powers of Brahman as expounded by Śrīnivāsācārya. Both contend that these powers are inseparably inherent in Brahman and not something external to it. This is also laid down with stress that Brahman is not exhausted by creation, it is always beyond that.



The Highest Reality according to Bhāskarācārya is Brahman and it is ultimately devoid of attributes and form—

“निराकारमेवोपास्यं शुद्धं कारणरूपम्।”<sup>52</sup>

Śrīnivāsa on the other hand contends Brahman to be endowed with attributes and calls It as Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Paramātmān and so on, while Bhāskarācārya holds that Brahman is Saguṇa or Sākāra (is having form) only in the effected state.

Bhāskarācārya also holds that Saguṇa form of Brahman is neither ‘Saguṇa’ as that of Śrīnivāsa because he refers It as pure knowledge and pure existence (सल्लक्षणं and बोधलक्षणम्) nor Nirviśeṣa like that of Śaṅkarācārya because Bhāsakara very often refers to It as omniscient and omnipotent (सर्वज्ञः, सर्वशक्तिः).

Bhāskara holds that Brahman has two forms, one in causal state (कारणरूपः) and other in effected state (कार्यरूपः). It is one, non-dual-as cause and of diverse forms in effected state, as gold is one entity but many as bracelets, ear-rings, necklaces etc. In other words it is Bhinnābhinnarūpa—

“अतो भिन्नाभिन्नरूपं ब्रह्मेति।”<sup>53</sup>

Further he states that abhinna or causal state of Brahman is real, while bhinna or effected state, is due to working of upādhi or limiting adjuncts.<sup>54</sup> But it is emphatically stated that this ‘bhinna’ state is no less real—

“न चैवं गन्तव्यमतो मायामात्रमिदं सर्वम्।”<sup>55</sup>

We find no such specification in Śrīnivāsa’s philosophy, nor does he state that ‘Abhinna’ state or causal state is real and ‘Bhinna’ or effected state is Aupādhika. For him both are equally natural (Svābhāvika) and real. Thus inspite of accepting world as real, both differ.

Bhāskarācārya clearly states<sup>56</sup> that there is no contradiction involved in accepting both 'Bheda i.e. difference as well as 'Abheda' non-difference to be real, simultaneously. These two are not opposite in nature as heat and cold, sun and shade and so on. As gold and its products namely earrings, necklaces etc; have 'Bhedābheda' relation i.e. earrings etc., are different as well as non-different from gold, in the same way Brahman the cause, and universe the effect, has 'Bhinnābhinna' relation with It. This relation is seen every where in this world. So says A.K. Guha— "Hence under the advaita-dvaita theory as upheld by the Vaiṣṇavas there is really no union of contradictories but only that of the objects of similar nature. To use the language of Plato the Jīvas being the same, nature cleave there into."<sup>57</sup>

Besides Brahman, individual soul is the other Reality, which is accepted by both as eternal, immutable and so on—

“ब्रह्म च कारणात्मना कार्यात्मना जीवात्मना च त्रिधावस्थितम्।”<sup>58</sup>

But that there is basic difference in their concept will be clear from the treatment of nature etc. of the individual soul done below.

The main difference is caused, by the concept of relationship between individual soul and Brahman. Śrīnivāsācārya regards Jīva to be different as well as non-different from Brahman not in the Mundane state only but also in released state because this relation is regarded by him as Svābhāvika or 'natural'. Therefore it persists in all states.<sup>59</sup>

Contrary to this Bhāskarācārya maintains that the Bhedābheda relationship of Jīva and Brahman is Aupādhika or adventitious and not Svābhāvika or natural. It is due to Upādhis' such as Karma, Avidyā etc., that the Jīva appears as different as well as non-different from Brahman. It is



illustrated by the instances of sparks and fire, etc.<sup>60</sup> As sparks in reality are non-different from fire and appear to be different due to Upādhis, such as time and space etc. in the same way Jīva is non-different from Brahman. Its difference is mere Aupādhika or adventitious on the removal of which its real nature is manifested.

Bhāskarācārya, however, also contends along with Śrīnivāsa that by 'amśa' in the sūtra—

“अंशो नानाव्यपदेशाद्....।”<sup>61</sup>

is meant that Jīva is part of Brahman which is non-different from It. But whereas Śrīnivāsa holds that it is related to it as 'part and whole', there Bhāskarācārya contends that Jīva is said to be part of Brahman in Mudane world, due to Upādhis like Śaṅkarācārya and ultimately it is non-different. 'Part and whole' relationship exists only in the bound state—

“उपाधीनां च बलवत्वात् समूर्च्छितस्तन्मयः संसरतीत्यभेदोऽभ्युपगम्यते।”<sup>62</sup>

This Aupādhika concept of Bhāskarācārya has the influence of Śaṅkara's doctrine of upādhis, but what distinguished him from Śaṅkara, is his consideration of this state also as real. That, Bhāskara admits the reality of upādhis, is evident from his commentary on the aphorism—

“यथा च तक्षोभयथा।”<sup>63</sup>

wherein he says clearly that Aupādhika state is not unreal from ultimate point of view—

“न चौपाधिकं कर्तृत्वमपारमार्थिकम्।”

It is explained by illustrations such as a pot put on fire becomes hot but the heat of the pot though unnatural is not unreal. Therefore Aupādhika state is unnatural but also not unreal. He himself says that by the word 'Aupādhika' is meant प्रवाहनित्य<sup>64</sup> i.e. that which is eternal only in succession. That

he admits the sense given to 'Upādhi' by Śaṅkara is evident from such illustrations as fire and spark, sky and sky conditioned by pitcher etc. Therefore 'Upādhi' according to Bhāskara means that 'conditioning factor' which does characterize the conditioned object as unreal. According to him, avidyā, karma etc. are upādhis which cause sense of difference (भेदः)—

“.....भेदोऽप्य नादिकालप्रवृत्ताविद्याकर्मोपाध्यवच्छेदादंशो हि परस्याहं जीवो नाम यथाग्नेर्विस्फुलिङ्गाः यथाकाशस्य पार्थिवाद्यधिष्ठानोपाध्यवच्छिन्नः छिद्रप्रवेश....।”<sup>65</sup>

Dr. Roma Bose rightly remarks that according to Bhāskarācārya the criterion of reality is not 'existence for ever but mere existence'.<sup>66</sup>

The concept of Upādhis being clear, now it would be easy to follow the further concept of Bhāskarācārya. Accordingly he regards Jīva as separate entity in bound state only and that is also due to Upādhis, while in its natural or released state it is regarded as non-different from Brahman. Śrīnivāsa contends that Jīva remains separate entity even in Mokṣa, related to Brahman in the relation of difference and non-difference.

About the nature of the individual souls Śrīnivāsācārya contends that it is knower; knowledge being its very form, which is better than that of Bhāskara, who maintains that it is pure consciousness. Because consciousness also cannot exist without substratum *i.e.* conscious entity, it has been already pointed out while dealing with Śaṅkara.

Bhāskarācārya regards the state of individual soul's being agent and enjoyer as Aupādhika.<sup>67</sup> The process of doing (कर्तृत्वं) and enjoying (भोक्तृत्वं) remains as long as there remains Upādhi such as Avidyā etc. In its natural state it is no longer an enjoyer or doer. On the other hand, Śrīnivāsa



in consonance to his view point, upholds that individual soul is knower and enjoyer even in released state.

Śrīnivāsācārya maintains that the size of the individual soul is atomic or अणुपरिमाणकः and is called Vibhu sometimes due to the all pervading nature of its attribute, knowledge, which exists upto the existence of soul and the self being eternal, the attribute is also eternal.

Bhāskarācārya regards the individual soul to be aṇu only due to upādhis—

“तदिदमौपाधिकमणुत्वं जीवस्यातो द्रष्टव्यम्।”<sup>68</sup>

In the released state it is of vibhu parimāṇa, being same in nature of Brahman. It is due to the super-imposition of the qualities of ahaṁkāra that the Jīva appears as aṇu. According to him sūtras (2.3.18-28) describe the Aupādhika state of the individual soul in which it is of Aṇuparimāṇa and in the Sūtra (3.2.29) onwards it is stated that Jīva is of Vibhu Parimāṇa which is its real natural state. But the view of Bhāskara does not appear to be correct. If the Sūtrakāra Bādarāyaṇa had meant to express what Bhāskara depicts it to be then why not Bādrāyaṇa referred first of all, to the natural or Svābhāvika measurement of Jīva rather than first refer to the Aupādhika nature. Whenever we explain the nature of a thing we first describe it by its natural and essential qualities and not by the unnatural qualities. Therefore the view point of Bhāskarācārya is not correct. Besides as he says that it is due to ‘guṇa’ or qualities of ahaṁkāra, that Jīva appears to be aṇu, this can be contradicted on the same lines as that of Śaṅkarācārya.<sup>69</sup>

In the mudane state, he accepts Jīvas to be innumerable (being limited by upādhis) like Śrīnivāsācārya and due to that there does not arise the question of co-mingling of happiness and sorrows of various souls.<sup>70</sup> This state being



Aupādhika, in released state Jīva is one and non-dual. There, it being free of all worldly experiences, naturally the question of mixture of experiences does not arise at all.

There is difference between the two on the point of relationship of world and Brahman too. Both regard world as real and hold it to have Bhedābheda relation to Brahman. As in the case of relation between Jīvātman and Brahman, world is maintained to be different as well as non-different from Brahman at all times by Śrīnivāsa. Because it is Svābhāvika relation. Bhāskarācārya contends that Brahman and its effected state namely world are related in the relation of Bhinnābhinna or Bhedābheda which is also Aupādhika or adventitious, *i.e.* due to working of Upādhis. When these Upādhis are removed Brahman existing in the effected form, *i.e.* as universe, again becomes non-different or one with Brahman, in the causal state (कारणात्मना). As different golden ornaments are different as well as non-different from gold, different in various modified forms but non-different as pure gold alone.<sup>71</sup> It is evident from the study of Bhāskarābhāṣya, that in the beginning he also refers to two forms of Brahman—‘कारणात्मा’ and ‘कार्यात्मा’<sup>72</sup> and it is later on, that he maintains that only ‘Abhinna’ or ‘कारणरूप’ is Svābhāvika and the other adventitious.<sup>73</sup>

Bhāskarācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya differ on the point of nature of liberation. According to Śrīnivāsa, liberation consists in becoming similar to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being different as well as non-different from Him—

“अनन्तेन ब्रह्मणा श्रीपुरुषोत्तमेन सह साम्यं गच्छति।”<sup>74</sup>

But Bhāskarācārya upholds that in liberated state the individual soul does not become similar to Brahman in attributes and in respect of pure Intelligence only but becomes one with it. It is united or non-different from It in this state,



as pure water becoming non-different, when united with pure water. Or as 'ākāśa' conditioned by pitcher becomes one with 'māhākāśa' on the breaking of pitcher—"यथा च भग्ने घटे घटाकाशो महाकाश एव भवति दृष्टत्वादेवमत्रापि। जीवपरयोश्च स्वाभाविकोऽभेद औपाधिकस्तु भेदः स तन्निवृत्तौ निवर्तते।" 175

and

"परमात्मावस्था हि मुक्तिरवधारिता सा चैकरूपा।" 176

Both agree in maintaining that liberation is possible only after the fall of this body *i.e.* Videhamukti. Realization is not possible unless and until we are relieved of this embodied form—

"अतो जीवदवस्थायां न मोक्षः।" 177

in addition to this Bhāskarācārya admits 'Krama-mukti' or gradual liberation also.

As to the means of liberation Bhāskarācārya emphatically states that Jñāna or knowledge and Karma or actions, both synthetically practised lead to the realization—

".....मुक्त्युपाय-भूतं ज्ञानं कर्म चानुष्ठेयम्।" 178

Neither of these two practised severally can be the proper means. Actions are neither to be taken for purifying the mind nor as subsidiary means. By knowledge he means 'upāsana' or meditation—

"कर्मोपसानयोश्च समुच्चयो वक्ष्यते।" 179

As said already he gives full emphasis on actions. According to him without the proper knowledge of actions, one is not able to know with which actions, knowledge is to be combined. By knowing fully about actions he comes to know 'kāmya' and 'niṣidha Karmas' which are to be avoided and 'nitya Karmas' which are to be practised. But actions alone are not sufficient because these yield transitory fruits.

These are to be combined by Jñāna which arises from Śravaṇa *i.e.* hearing, Manana—thinking deeply and Nididhyāsana *i.e.* concentration on scriptural passages.<sup>80</sup>

For Upāsana or meditation, he lays down that one should meditate on the causal aspect of Brahman alone.<sup>81</sup>

Śrīnivāsa accepts the importance of both Jñāna and Karma but like Bhāskara does not emphasize that without actions one is not capable to realize Brahman. He does not give so much significance to actions though it has its own place. He accepts loving devotion as the means for ब्रह्मप्राप्ति: *i.e.* realization of Brahman.

In conclusion we can say that inspite of the fact that both propound Bhedābheda still there is difference in view points on the basic concepts of both systems. Bhāskara's concept of Avidyā, Upādhis etc. depicts clear effect of Śaṅkara but his progress on Śaṅkara's concepts of Upādhi etc. is also commendable. We do not find any clear reference today of Bhāskara's doctrines carried on by his successors in history, as we see in the case of Svābhāvika Bhedābheda wherein a number of followers engendered the philosophy of the school.

### Rāmānujācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya

As is quite well known Rāmānujācārya propounds qualified monism or 'Viśiṣṭādvaita' and here his system is taken up along with that of Śrīnivāsācārya to visualize similar and dissimilar points of their philosophies.

Śrīnivāsācārya and Rāmānujācārya both declare Brahman to be the ultimate Reality. Rāmānujācārya clearly states, what he understands by the term 'Brahman'—

“ब्रह्मशब्देन स्वभावतो निरस्तनिखिलदोषोऽनवधिकातिशयासंख्येय-  
कल्याणगुणगणः पुरुषोत्तमोऽभिधीयते। सर्वत्र बृहत्त्वगुणयोगेन ब्रह्मशब्दः।



बृहत्त्वञ्च स्वरूपेण गुणैश्च यत्रानवधिकातिशयं सोऽस्य मुख्योऽर्थः। स च सर्वेश्वर एव। अतो ब्रह्मशब्दस्तत्रैव मुख्यवृत्तः।'<sup>82</sup>

“By the word ‘Brahman’ is denoted the Highest Puruṣa, or Puruṣottama in whom all the blemishes are by nature expelled, (and who is) possessed of a host of auspicious qualities, unlimited, unsurpassed and innumerable. Every where the word Brahman (is understood) as being associated with the quality of magnitude. Where there is unlimited excess in respect of nature as well as qualities, that is its primary sense. That, further, is definitely the ‘Lord of all’. Therefore the word ‘Brahman’ has its primary sense in respect of that alone.”<sup>83</sup>

Therefore according to him Lord Viṣṇu is known as Brahman due to its qualities etc. As we know already Śrīnivāsācārya also regards Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be the Highest Reality who is known as Brahman due to its बृहत्त्वगुणः.<sup>84</sup> That is to say almost same explanation is given.

Both contend that Brahman is not ‘सन्मात्रं’ i.e. mere existence. He is endowed with all auspicious qualities and these qualities are eternal and natural—

“न चेश्वरः सन्मात्रमेवेति वक्तुं शक्यम् तस्य तदंशत्वभ्युपगमा-  
त्सविशेषत्वाच्च। न च तस्य ज्ञानानन्दाद्यनन्तकल्याणगुणयोगः कादाचित्क  
इति वक्तुं शक्यते। तेषां स्वाभाविकत्वेन सदातनत्वात्।”<sup>85</sup>

He is Anādi (beginningless), Ananta (endless), omnipresent, omnipotent, Lord of all and superior to all. He is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss (सच्चिदानन्द).

Both agree that Brahman is endowed with qualities and not ‘Nirguṇa’ or bereft of attributes. Rāmānujācārya emphatically holds that Brahman is ‘Saguṇa’ and not ‘Nirguṇa’ because no Pramāṇa or means of knowledge can be found to comprehend a ‘Nirviśeṣa’ thing. And if Brahman

is Nirviśeṣa, how any Śruti can be produced to establish the existence. According to him the scriptural passages which declare It as 'Nirviśeṣa',<sup>86</sup> mean it to be devoid of certain Viśeṣas only and not of all Viśeṣas; similarly the terms 'Nirākāra' and 'Nirguṇa' etc. are explained to mean void of inauspicious form or qualities. Śrīnivāsācārya recommends these explanations and explains them in the same way himself too.<sup>87</sup>

Rāmānujācārya also accepts an identical form of Vāsudeva, which is known as Ṣaḍguṇya form which consists of Vūha, Vibhava etc. It is held by Rāmānuja that by propitiating Vibhava one attains Vūha and by propitiating Vūha, one realizes the Highest Brahman, Vāsudeva.

Besides accepting Vedas as Pramāṇa, Rāmānujācārya accepts Pañcarātra texts equally authoritative;<sup>88</sup> but Śrīnivāsācārya does not accept this.

Śrīnivāsācārya and Rāmānujācārya both jointly hold Brahman to be operative as well as material cause of the world—(निमित्तकारणम्) and (उपादानकारणम्). According to Rāmānujācārya Cit and Acit existing as the body of Paramātmā in subtle form, in the causal state are transformed into gross form in the effected state—

“अतः स्थूलसूक्ष्मचिदचित्प्रकारकं ब्रह्मैव कार्यं कारणञ्चेति ब्रह्मोपादानं जगत्। सूक्ष्मचिदचिद्वस्तुशरीरं ब्रह्मैव कारणमिति ब्रह्मोपादानत्वेऽपि संघातस्योपादानत्वेन चिदचितोब्रह्मणश्च स्वभावसंकराऽप्युपपन्नतरः।”<sup>89</sup>

As is stated in the text it is the Cit and Acit forming the body of Brahman which are turned into gross form, in the effected state and form its body, in that state too.

Guṇas and doṣas of ātman do not touch Brahman as the guṇas and doṣas of body do not soil the Ātman. While Śrīnivāsa contends that the Śaktis of Brahman called Parā



and Aparā existing in subtle form, are turned into gross forms as Cit and Acit. These powers are related to It as power related to powerful (शक्तिः and शक्तिमान्).<sup>90</sup>

As is natural, both uphold *Pariṇāmavāda*.<sup>91</sup> According to Rāmānujācārya, the change in condition of a thing, constitutes transformation—

“अवस्थान्तरापत्तिरेव हि कार्यता।”<sup>92</sup>

and therefore it is a real change. Śrīnivāsa also holds the same view, the difference lies in wording only.

The second reality accepted by both is Individual soul or Cit. Both agree in holding that individual soul is the knower and not merely pure knowledge—

“ज्ञ एवायमात्मा ज्ञातृस्वरूप एव न ज्ञानमात्रं नापि जड़स्वरूपः।”<sup>93</sup>

Both hold individual soul to be of atomic size (अणुपरिमाणकः) and it is called Vibhu only due to its everlasting attribute i.e. knowledge.<sup>94</sup> The self is not only the knower, but also doer and enjoyer. The doctrine that souls are innumerable is supported by both.

Both contend that individual soul is a part of Brahman,<sup>95</sup> but there is a slight difference in their approach. While Śrīnivāsācārya expounds this relation of part and whole as that existing between power and powerful, tree and its leaves, sea and its waves, etc., there Rāmānujācārya takes it in another way. He says that individual soul is a part of Brahman as ‘Viśeṣaṇa’ or qualifying attribute forms part of qualified object or Viśeṣya—

यथा गवाश्वशुक्लकृष्णादीनां गोत्वादिविशिष्टानां वस्तूनां गोत्वादीनि विशेषणान्यंशाः। यथा वा देहिनो देवमनुष्यादेर्देहांशस्तद्वत्। एकवस्त्वेकदेशत्वं ह्यंशत्वम्। विशिष्टस्यैकस्य वस्तुनो विशेषणमंश एव। तथा च विवेचका विशिष्टे वस्तुनि विशेषणांशोऽयं विशेष्यांशोऽयमिति व्यपदिशन्ति। विशेषण-

विशेष्ययोरंशांशित्वेऽपि स्वभाववैलक्षण्यं दृश्यते। एवं जीवपरयोर्विशेषण-  
विशेष्ययोरंशांशित्वं स्वभावभेदश्चोपपद्यते।<sup>96</sup>

This relation would be clearer as we will explain the relation of the individual soul and Brahman as held by both of the scholars.

According to Śrīnivāsācārya, the relation of individual soul and Brahman is that of Bhedābheda or difference and non-difference. He contends that individual soul is non-different from Brahman, being dependent on It for its existence, maintenance etc. In this respect it is non-different, but as its nature is different, it is also said to be different from Brahman. The individual self is liable to Doṣas etc. and is of limited knowledge and so on, while Brahman is bereft of all kinds of sin and is in possession of unlimited knowledge. The relation of part and whole indicates that individual soul is different and non-different from Brahman and it is named as Bhedābheda by Śrīnivāsācārya.

On the other hand Rāmānuja holds that Cit and Acit form the body of Brahman in the causal state as well as in the effected state.<sup>97</sup> According to him Paramātmān is the soul of the individual souls and Acit entity, which form its body or शरीरं and Cit and Acit exist in It inherently, not only in the causal state but also in the effected state and also because It is their controller.<sup>98</sup>

Therefore the relation between Cit, Acit and Brahman is 'शरीरशरीरीभावसम्बन्धः' i.e. 'that of body and its soul'.

What he understands by the term 'शरीरं' is pointed out by him. He defines 'शरीरं' as—

“अतो यस्य चेतनस्य यद्द्रव्यं सर्वात्मना स्वार्थे नियन्तुं धारयितुं च शक्यं तच्छेषतैकस्वरूपञ्च तत्तस्य शरीरमिति शरीरलक्षण- मास्थेयम्।”<sup>99</sup>

Accordingly as Cit and Acit are borne by Brahman for



its own purpose and are related to in 'Śeṣāśeṣibhāva Saṁbandha', so these form the body of Paramātmān. Cit and Acit may be said to have 'Prakāraprakāri-bhāvasaṁbandha' with Brahman. And therefore, there is 'sāmānādhikaraṇaya' between the two.<sup>100</sup> Being the Viśeṣaṇas or modes of Brahman, these are also called parts and like parts these are different as well as non-different from Brahman. But these three form one composite entity known as Brahman and these three are not separate entities. That is why the relation is known as 'Viśiṣṭādvaita'. Cit and Acit, forming the modes of Brahman, serve Its purpose and are different from It, but constituting Its body are non-different from It; who is their controller as the soul is of the body. Rāmānujācārya emphasizes this point time and again that as fault of bodies do not touch the soul any way, in the same way guṇa and doṣas of body, constituted of Cit and Acit Padārthas do not soil It any way.<sup>101</sup> Brahman is beyond all kinds of modifications, which affect Cit or Acit.

As is evident from the discussion done above, Rāmānujācārya regards the world or Acit also as forming the body of Brahman in the causal state, in the subtle form and in the effected state, in the gross form.<sup>102</sup> Likewise it also stands in the relation of 'Prakāra' i.e. mode, or as Viśeṣaṇa or adjective of Brahman and therefore being regarded as part it is different as well as non-different from Brahman. On the other hand Śrīnivāsācārya accepts Acit to be transformation of Brahman's power and it stands in relation of Bheda i.e. difference as well as of Abheda i.e. non-difference from Brahman. World is different due to its being gross, liable to modifications etc., which is in contrast to Brahman who is beyond all changes—

“जीववन्मृथक्सिद्धयनर्हविशेषणत्वेनाचिद्वस्तुनो ब्रह्मांशत्वम्। विशिष्ट-  
वस्त्वेकदेशत्वेनाभेदव्यवहारो मुख्यः। विशेषणविशेष्ययोः स्वरूपस्वभावभेदेन  
भेदव्यवहारोऽपि मुख्यः। ब्रह्मणो निर्दोषत्वञ्च रक्षितम्।”<sup>103</sup>

“i.e. like Jīva, Acit, being the qualifying attribute having inseparable existence is part of Brahman. Abheda or non-difference (between the two) is also primary, because it constitutes the part of Brahman. Bheda or difference is also predominant, due to difference in form and nature between the qualified object and qualifying object. The statement that Brahman is devoid of all doṣas is also maintained.” Both uphold the view that world is as Real as Brahman Itself<sup>104</sup> and not unreal. Rāmānuja emphatically states that in the case, that the world be taken as unreal, as is regarded by Śaṅkarācārya, then non-difference (अनन्यत्वम्) between Brahman and universe cannot take place. How can a non-existent entity be said to be identical with an existent thing. Therefore identity or similarity of Brahman and universe cannot be established which is laid down by Sūtrakāra himself.<sup>105</sup> Therefore ācārya Rāmānuja holds that world is real—

“ये तु कार्यकारणयोरनन्यत्वं कार्यस्य मिथ्यात्वाश्रयणेन वर्णयन्ति न तेषां कार्यकारणयोरनन्यत्वं सिध्यति। सत्यमिथ्यार्थयोरैक्यानुपपत्तेः। तथा सति ब्रह्मणो मिथ्यात्वं जगतः सत्यत्वं वा स्यात्।”<sup>106</sup>

Here the remark of Rāmānujācārya seems to be very aptly put forth.

To conceive the end of this existence which has no beginning is a strain of thought. Still in consonance with other philosophical systems, and Indian philosophies in general, Rāmānuja and Śrīnivāsa both declare the end of this circle of transmigration, in realization of Brahman. Both uphold that on realization of Brahman, one is neither submerged in Brahman nor becomes Brahman itself but the realizer only enjoys—साम्यापत्तिः That is to say the self becomes similar to Brahman in qualities etc.

But there is not much difference in the concept of both.



According to Ācārya Rāmānuja, in the released state individual soul experiences its identity with Brahman as a mode (Prakāra). Although being non-different from Brahman, it is said to be similar to Brahman in qualities only because its nature becomes similar to Brahman, the Prakāri. To put it in other words, individual soul enjoys purity which is similar to Brahman—

“अतोऽविभागेनाहं ब्रह्मास्मीत्येवानुभवति। साम्यसाधर्म्यव्यपदेशो ब्रह्म-  
प्रकारभूतस्यैव प्रत्यगात्मनः स्वरूपं तत्सममिति देवादिप्राकृतरूपप्रहाणेन ब्रह्म-  
समानशुद्धिं प्रतिपादयति।”<sup>107</sup>

Thus according to Rāmānuja, Jīva remains as a ‘Prakāra’ or mode of Brahman in released state also and therefore although being non-different, it is different too.

Similarly Śrīnivāsācārya holds that the Jīva experiences similarity with Brahman in case of attributes *etc.* even in released state—

“तस्मान्मुक्तः परस्मादात्मानं विभागसहिष्णुनाऽविभागेनानुभवतीति सिद्धम्।”<sup>108</sup>

Thus there does not seem to be much difference between their view points of both.

Rāmānujācārya clearly states that ‘Ahamartha’ which constitutes the very essence of ātman—

प्रत्युत स्वरूपमेवाहमर्थ आत्मनः।<sup>109</sup>

remains present even in Mokṣa, otherwise according to him ‘Apavarga’ or liberation would mean nothing but destruction of soul; which is not desirable to any person who is desirous of salvation.<sup>110</sup> This is to be distinguished from ahaṁkāra and is used in the sense of knower or “I am the knower”—

“तस्माज्ज्ञाताहमर्थ एवात्मा।”<sup>111</sup>

which is said to be very essence of the soul in aphorism (2.3.19 etc.). This fact is acceptable to Śrīnivāsācārya also.

Both the Ācāryas reject the concept of Jīvanamukti. Rāmānuja emphatically puts his ideas as—

“...तत एव जीवन्मुक्तिरपि दूरोत्सारिता। को चेयं जीवन्मुक्तिः। सशरीरस्यैव मोक्ष इति चेन्माता मे वन्ध्येतिवदसंगतार्थवचनम्।”<sup>112</sup>

Because he holds that salvation is not possible without the fall of the body. Liberation in this very life is as inconsistent as to say that my mother is barren. Therefore he accepts only ‘Videhamukti’ and Ācārya Śrīnivāsa agrees with him in this context.

As regards the means of liberation Rāmānujācārya contends that actions or Karmas are to be performed. For without the proper knowledge of actions and their proper performance, there cannot arise Jñāna or knowledge which is necessary for realization of Brahman—

“तस्मादनादिकर्मप्रवाहरूपाज्ञानमूलत्वाद्बन्धस्य तन्निबर्हणमुक्तलक्षण-ज्ञानादेव। तदुत्पत्तिश्चाहरहरनुष्ठीयमानपरमपुरुषाराधनवेषात्मयाथात्म्यबुद्धि-विशेषसंस्कृतवर्णाश्रमोचितकर्मलभ्या।”<sup>113</sup>

Rāmānujācārya gives stress on Bhakti or devotion in particular. By whole hearted devotion one is able to realize Brahman. He enumerates seven aids to devotional consciousness viz. Viveka *i.e.* purity of food, Vimoha *i.e.* freedom from desire, Abhyāsa *i.e.* repetition, Kriyā *i.e.* action, Kalyāṇ *i.e.* truth etc. Anavasād *i.e.* absence of despondency and lastly avoidance of other extremes.

Śrīnivāsācārya also gives equal emphasis on knowledge and devotion, Karmas according to him are meant for purification of mind.

It might be added here as concluding remark that there is not much difference among the two philosophers.



According to one universe consisting of Cit and Acit is the manifestation of powers of Brahman according to other it is the manifestation of the subtle body into gross form. By the words body and Śakti they mean much the same thing. Rāmānujācārya himself says<sup>114</sup> that the relation of universe to Brahman is like that of a ray of light and luminary and that between power and powerful—

“यथैव हि प्रभायाः प्रभावानन्यथाभूतस्तथा प्रभास्थानीयात्त्वांशाज्जीवादंशी परोऽप्यर्थान्तरभूत इत्यर्थः” and “एवं प्रभा प्रभावद्रूपेण शक्तिशक्तिमद्रूपेण शरीरात्मभावेन चांशांशीभावं जगद् ब्रह्मणोः पराशरादयः स्मरन्ति।”<sup>115</sup>

Therefore both can be said to advocate Bhedābheda, Śrīnivāsa puts equal stress on ‘Bheda’ as well as on Abheda while Rāmānuja’s leaning is towards ‘Abheda’ more, and he names his doctrine also as Viśiṣṭādvaita, viewing the relation in a little different way, otherwise basically both do not seem to stand apart. As explained by Rāmānuja himself, ray of light though a mode of luminary, is non-different from it but still it is different.

### **Śrīnivāsācārya and Madhvācārya**

Madhvācārya is well known in Indian Philosophy as the propounder of Dvaitavāda or doctrine of Dualism. Here both Bhedavāda and Bhedābhedavāda are taken up together.

Brahman, the supreme Reality, is regarded to be Viṣṇu by Madhvācārya or in other words, according to him, Viṣṇu is another name for Brahman, ‘ब्रह्मशब्दश्च विष्णावेव’.<sup>116</sup>

He is also known as Paramātmān, Bhagawān, Vāsudeva etc.<sup>117</sup> Madhvācārya also takes the word Brahman to be derived from the same root ‘Bṛh’,<sup>118</sup> as by Śrīnivāsācārya and others.

Madhvācārya holds that Brahman alone is independent (स्वतन्त्रः) Reality, all the other realities are dependent (परतन्त्रः) on it.

This is in distinction from Śrīnivāsācārya's concept, who does not accept the independence of Brahman and dependence of other realities such as Cit and Acit. There is no such demarcation in his system.

Both Madhvācārya and Śrīnivāsācārya agree that Brahman is the efficient cause of the universe. Madhvācārya says clearly that it is Bhagawān Viṣṇu, who is responsible for creation, subsistence and annihilation of the universe, bondage and release, knowledge and ignorance—

“सृष्टिस्थितिसंहारनियमज्ञानाज्ञानबन्धमोक्षाः यतः।”<sup>119</sup>

Śrī Viṣṇu is also the material cause of the universe. He is called Prakṛti (fem. word) for two reasons, firstly because He can be called by both the genders namely feminine as well as masculine and secondly because He is the material cause of this universe. Prakṛti is another name for his desire, will or volition, which forms His very nature. Consequently He is called as Prakṛti too sometimes—

“प्रकृतिर्वासनेत्येवं तवेच्छाऽनन्त कथ्यत इति वचनात्तदभिधैव प्रकृतिशब्देनोच्यते। सोऽभिध्या स जूतिः स प्रज्ञा स आनन्द इति श्रुतेरभिध्या च स्वरूपमेव च।”<sup>120</sup>

Prakṛti is regarded as free, existing at all times, all are dependent on its Will, which Itself is dependent on Brahman and works in accordance to its volition—

“सर्वायतना सर्वकाला सर्वेच्छा न बद्धा-बन्धका सैषा प्रकृति-रविकृतिरिति।”<sup>121</sup>

Prakṛti of Madhvācārya is dependent and works according to the wish of Īśvara and is to be distinguished from the Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya school, which is Independent. The view of Madhvācārya does not appear to be much different from that of Śrīnivāsācārya, who holds, that it is the powers of Brahman known as Parā and Aparā, which in



fact create the universe. And it is also held by him that these powers are not separate entities, but inherent in Brahman and Prakṛti of Madhvācārya is also regarded as the very power of Brahman. Therefore there does not seem to be much difference.

Both agree mutually that Brahman is 'Saguṇa' i.e. endowed with divine attributes and all sorts of auspicious qualities. According to Madhvācārya Viṣṇu is equipped with all guṇas—"स हि सर्वगुणैः पूर्णः"<sup>122</sup> and therefore perfect. Being Independent he does not require any extraneous thing—

"परतन्त्रो ह्यपेक्षेत स्वतन्त्र किमपेक्षते।"<sup>123</sup>

Ācārya Madhva and ācārya Śrīnivāsa, both maintain that Brahman or Viṣṇu possesses a body which is 'चिन्मय' or self Luminous.

In consonance to their concept of creation, they accept the doctrine of transformation or parīṇāmavāda.

True to the genuine traditions of the Vedāntic philosophers, Madhvācārya maintains that the existence of a creator cannot be proved by any means other than the scriptures. Formal logic can never succeed in establishing Brahman's causality of universe to one's entire satisfaction. But while accepting the authority of scriptures, he along with the Vedas, Purāṇas and Mūla Rāmāyaṇa accepts the authoritativeness of Pañcarātra texts also—

"ऋग्यजुः सामाथर्वञ्च भारतं पाञ्चरात्रकम्।

मूलरामायणञ्चैव शास्त्रमित्यभिधीयते॥"<sup>124</sup>

Jīva or Individual soul is the second Reality accepted by both. While Śrīnivāsācārya takes it as separate category, Madhvācārya on the other hand, includes it under the general heading of Dependent Reality which consists of cetanas and acetanas i.e. sentient and insentient beings. As stated earlier, Independent Reality according to him is Brahman alone.

Madhvācārya holds that Jīvas or individual souls originate from Brahman—

“जीवोऽप्यत एव परमेश्वरादुत्पद्यते।”<sup>125</sup>

These souls are regarded as eternal as Brahman—

“नित्यो नित्यानामिति जीवस्यापि नित्यत्वमुक्तम्।”<sup>126</sup>

Here Madhvācārya agrees with Śrīnivāsācārya.

Both are in full agreement on the point of nature of individual soul. Both hold that individual soul's nature is of unalloyed bliss and pure Intelligence and essentially free from any kind of misery or pain. It is due to ignorance, the result of actions that it feels as bound and miserable. Bondage, though accepted as real, is not natural.

It is held by both the philosophers that the individual soul is self-luminous, and it is not only conscious but also knower. As a natural corollary to this they accept Jīva to be doer and enjoyer too.

Madhvācārya like Śrīnivāsa maintains that individual soul is of the size of Aṇu or atom.<sup>127</sup> The view that the sūtras declaring it to be of atomic size are pūrvapakṣa and therefore it is to be taken as Vibhu, is refuted by Madhvācārya too.

He also accepts that souls are innumerable and therefore there is no such possibility as the co-mixture of karmas and the fruits of different souls.

About the relation of the individual soul and Brahman, Madhvācārya is of the opinion that individual soul is different from Brahman, the fact being emphatically stated—

“सत्य आत्मा सत्यो जीवः सत्यं भिदा सत्यं भिदा सत्यं भिदा  
मैवाऽरुवण्यो मैवाऽरुवण्यो इति पैङ्गिश्रुतिः।”<sup>128</sup>

Jīva is not Brahman because the former is of limited knowledge, dependent, liable to happiness and miseries etc. While the latter is omnipresent, omniscient, independent, free and so on.<sup>129</sup> In case of Jīva's being non-different from



Brahman, Brahman would also be bound, released and so on along with Jivātman.

Ācārya Madhva holds that in scriptures individual soul is said to be anīśa or part of Brahman because it is similar as well as dissimilar from It, and therefore the scriptural texts declaring 'Bheda' i.e. difference between Jīva and Brahman should not be taken up literally.<sup>130</sup>

In fact there is difference between the two and the similarity or 'सादृश्यं' is very minor.

This relation is clarified by Madhvācārya through the medium of illustration of the sun and its reflections—

“यस्मादेवं परमेश्वरस्वरूपाणां मिथो न कश्चिद् भेदोऽत एव सादृश्याज्जीवस्यापि तथा स्यादिति तस्य प्रतिबिम्बत्वमुक्त्वा च शब्देन भेदं दर्शयति।”<sup>131</sup>

As 'प्रतिबिम्ब' or reflection of the Sun is different from it, in nature and does not exist in it, in the same way Jīvas are like reflections of Brahman—

“प्रतिबिम्बांशका जीवाः प्रादुर्भावाः परे स्मृताः। प्रतिबिम्बेष्वल्पसाम्यं स्वरूपाणीतराणि त्विति।”<sup>132</sup>

This is to say Jīvas bear only a little similitude to Brahman who is one Independent source of all consciousness and activity found in individual souls is due to Brahman and depends on it alone.

Ācārya puts it clearly that this relation viz. बिम्बप्रतिबिम्ब-भाव-संबन्धः is not due to any conditioning factor i.e. Upādhi but it is quite natural.<sup>133</sup> It is tried to be illustrated by the instance of rainbow. As rainbow appears of the sun without any conditioning factor, similarly Jīva comes into being, as the reflection of Brahman without any upādhi or limiting adjunct—

“अतएव भिन्नत्वतदधीनत्वसादृश्यरेव सूर्यकाद्युपमा नोपाध्य-  
धीनत्वादिना।”<sup>134</sup>

This sums up clearly the idea conveyed by the illustration.

The beauty and import of this simile is vividly brought out by Mr. B.N.K. Sharma<sup>135</sup> — “This beautiful simile of the Sun and the rainbow given by Madhvācārya brings out the significance of the relationship between Jīva and Brahman in a very impressive manner. The Jīva is the agent, the vehicle of the manifestation of the Divine. His Svarūpa has the potency which is activated and energized by the Divine Light falling upon it.....His devotees, who in their lives manifest these virtues. They are the raindrops that reveal the majesty and the glory that lie concealed in the white rays of the Sun. By this analogy, Madhvācārya wants to convey that every one of us is a tiny raindrop which still has the potency, the capacity to receive and manifest the divine light. The figure of the bimbapratibimbabhāva, thus gives meaning, expresses a great philosophical truth and value and establishes an intimacy of relationship between Man and God, which is the noblest truth of philosophy and religion to be attained by us.”

The relation being Svābhāvika or natural persists even in the released state. This relation constitutes the very essence of individual selves and therefore cannot be annulled. Like Brahman and Jīva this relation of difference is also eternal (सत्यं भिदा).

Madhvācārya, as is evident, emphasizes difference between individual soul and Brahman, but Śrīnivāsācārya, as we know, puts equal weight on difference and non-difference. He takes up scriptural texts declaring difference and non-difference between souls and Brahman as literal



and pointing to the actual relation and therefore interprets the word 'amśa' also to indicate the desired different and non-different relationship between the two.<sup>136</sup>

As already stated, the third category of 'Acit' or insentient being accepted, as separate entity by Śrīnivāsa is included by Madhva under the general category named Dependent. Here also this is the diverging point between the two. World is real, this fact is accepted by both equally.

The relation between the universe and Brahman is that of difference according to Madhva—

“इदं हि विश्वं भगवानिवेतरः।”<sup>137</sup>

This universe is like Brahman being dependent on it and is different as the latter is capable of creation etc.

Thus God, matter and souls constitute the three major Realities of Madhva's system, although souls and matter are realities of lesser order. These differences between Brahman, souls and matter are five fold. Difference between Brahman and Jīva, Brahman and matter, Jīvas and matter, between Jīvas and Jīvas and between matter and matter.

As we know, Śrīnivāsācārya on the other hand, propounds that the relation between world and Brahman is also Bhedābheda *i.e.* of difference cum non-difference. World being dependent on Brahman for its existence *etc.* is non-different from it and being characterized by grossness *etc.* is different from it, who is bereft of such qualities.

Madhvācārya upholds the separate existence of both Brahman and Jīva even in released state *i.e.* mokṣa. Even in Mokṣa, the individual soul remains dependent on Brahman. Independence belongs to Brahman only.<sup>138</sup> The identity between the two in the released state is discarded by Madhva.

Śrīnivāsa, on the other hand, propounds that in the released state, the individual soul remains in its natural relation of Bhedābheda with Brahman.

Both, however, agree on the point that even in the released state the size of individual soul remains atomic and it enjoys the bliss similar to that enjoyed by Brahman,<sup>139</sup> which is in accordance to the capacities of individual selves according to Madhva. But corporeal similarity between Jīva and Brahman in the released state, is forbidden by Madhvācārya—

“शरीराद्धि साम्यं प्रतिषिध्यते।”<sup>140</sup>

Released souls being devoid of both kinds of bodies viz. gross and subtle are possessed of only चिदात्मकं body.

Madhvācārya puts it clearly that the released state consists in the removal of bondage and liability to punishment etc. —

“बन्ध प्रत्यावायाभावे हि मोक्षस्यार्थवत्त्वम्। अन्यथा मोक्षत्वमेव न स्यात्।”<sup>141</sup>

Like Śrīnivāsācārya, Madhvācārya too recommends only Videhamukti and does not accept Jīvanmukti—

“एवमेव प्रारब्धकर्माभावे शरीरपातानन्तरमेवमोक्षः तद्भावे जन्मान्तराणीत्यनियमः।”<sup>142</sup>

Madhvācārya recognizes four-fold distinctions of Mukti viz. Sālokya i.e. dwelling in the same Loka or world, Sārūpya i.e. attainment of similar forms, Sāmipya i.e. staying always by the side of the Lord and Sāyuja<sup>143</sup> i.e. always being in the embrace of the Lord. These kinds of Muktis are obtained in the order of their merit and according to the increasing measure of knowledge.

Śrīnivāsācārya, however does not allude to these four kinds of Muktis.

As to the means of realization Madhvācārya emphasizes on ‘भगवत्प्रसादः’ or grace of God and for the grace of Bhagwān.



knowledge or Jñāna is the most important thing—‘विद्यैव मोक्षः’.<sup>144</sup> In the very first sūtra he emphasizes this point—

“यतो नारायणप्रसादमृते न मोक्षः, न च ज्ञानं विना अत्यर्थप्रसादः, अतो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा कर्तव्या।”<sup>145</sup>

Grace of Preceptor is also stressed upon. Guruprasāda is stronger than even one’s own efforts<sup>146</sup> but it does not mean that ‘Śravaṇa’ i.e. hearing, Manana or contemplation etc. or स्वप्रयत्नः is to be neglected, on the other hand these are to be practised to obtain the grace of preceptor.

Bhakti or devotion is accepted by Madhvācārya as the chief means for attainment of Brahman—

“परमात्मैव भक्त्या दर्शनं प्राप्य मुक्तिं ददाति। प्रधानसाधनत्वाद्भक्तिः करणत्वेनोच्यते।”<sup>147</sup>

Śrīnivāsācārya also accepts Bhakti, Jñāna etc. to be the means of realization and both hold that the performance of one’s duties in accordance with their respective varṇa and āśrama serve as auxiliary for realization of Brahman. Thus Madhvācārya puts stress on Bheda, while Śrīnivāsa regards Bheda and Abheda as equally predominant. Among the means of Mokṣa, both of the Vaiṣṇavite Philosophers agree, and differ, accordingly on the point of realization.

### Śrīnivāsācārya and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, born in Nawadvīpa, Bengal, in 16th century propounded Acintya-Bhedābheda. He wrote no books and whatever we come to know about it, is through the works of his followers, among whom Rūpa Goswāmin, Jīva Goswāmin and Sanātana etc. are worthy to be mentioned. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, who flourished in 18th century composed a systematic commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras.

Here Śrīnivāsācārya’s Svābhāvika Bhedābheda, has been taken up for comparative study with the Acintya-Bhedābheda of Śrī Caitanya as expounded by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa.

Both Śrīnivāsācārya and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa accept reality to be threefold i.e. consisting of Brahman, Cit and Acit.

Brahman is the ultimate Reality, is accepted by both. According to Baladeva, Brahman or the Highest Reality is Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu or Hari, a Personal God. He is said to be possessor of infinite auspicious virtues and powers which are inconceivable or Acintya. This fact is stressed by him time and again—

“विभुत्वे सति अणुत्वाधिकमचिन्त्यशक्तियोगाद्।”<sup>148</sup>

He is ‘Nirguṇa’, in the sense being, he is devoid of certain guṇas or attributes such as three guṇas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) of Prakṛti. He is ‘Saguṇa’ in the sense of being abode of all kinds of auspicious qualities.<sup>149</sup>

He is said to be the possessor of two kinds of qualities, namely, Majestic, awe-inspiring and blissful qualities. Baladeva holds that God has three powers namely Parā Śakti, Aparā Śakti and Avidyā Śakti. The first is also called as Viṣṇu Śakti, the second as Kṣetrajña and the third Karma or Māyā Śakti.<sup>150</sup> The Parā Śakti is again three fold, viz. Samvit or Jñāna Śakti (power of consciousness), Sannidhi or Bala-

Śakti (existence giving power) and Halādinī or Kriyā Śakti (bliss giving power). The Aparā Śakti and the Avidyā Śakti of the Lord consists of individual souls and matter respectively.<sup>151</sup>

Brahman is regarded as the efficient as well as the material cause of the universe. It is efficient cause of the universe through its Parā Śakti and material cause through its Aparā Śakti—

“तस्माद् एकमेव जीवप्रकृतिशक्तिमद् ब्रह्मजगदुपादानं तदात्मकञ्चेति अप्रच्युतपूर्वावस्थम् चावतिष्ठते।”<sup>152</sup>

Parā Śakti of Viṣṇu is identified with Śrī.<sup>153</sup> She is in



constant companionship with Him and being devoted to him, is different as well as non-different from Him. She is identical with Him, who is her very existence like the branch with the tree. At the same time she is different too and how this relation exists is inconceivable or Acintya. Lord is said to enjoy Bliss through Her, though bliss enjoyed by Him is different from that of the individual self. This relationship is explained by Tridandiswāmī Śrī Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāj<sup>154</sup> — “The absolute is a pair, not a single person. God is eternally coupled. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are identical and distinct at the same time. The relation between them is like that of the musk and its scent etc. So they are one and the same, but they assume the two forms only to enjoy the beauty of the beautiful sports.

Similarly Śrīnivāsācārya maintains that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the material and the efficient cause of the universe. He is the material cause in the sense that Parā and Aparā powers existing in Him, in subtle form are transformed into gross form at the time of creation.<sup>155</sup>

The relation of Parā Śakti with him conceived here by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is almost same to Śrīnivāsācārya but Parā is not said to be three fold and so on.

As is evident from the description given above, both hold Pariṇāmavāda or Doctrine of Transformation, that is to say real evolution takes place from Him at the time of creation, and not apparent.

Regarding the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa both agree in maintaining that he possesses a Superhuman or divine form. But it is Baladeva who points out attributes of body in detail. He points out that the body of Viṣṇu is luminous, omnipresent and so on.<sup>156</sup> The body is identical with Him.

According to Baladeva, the attributes of the Lord

Kṛṣṇa are not different from him but on the other hand these are identical with him and due to his possessing the super-logical powers even contradictory qualities and attributes co-exist in him. It is only for worldly purposes that these are spoken of as different. This distinction of substance and attribute, in the case of God and his attributes, is admitted on the basis of the theory of 'Viśeṣa' which is said to be representative of difference (भेदप्रतिनिधिः) By this concept of Viśeṣa, wherever no Bheda exists, there also Bheda is conceived. Yet this Viśeṣa is not mere Vikalpa or false verbal affirmation. It is explained by Mr. Das Gupta.<sup>157</sup> The concept of Viśeṣa means that though there is no difference between God and his qualities or between his nature and his body, yet there is some specific peculiarity which makes it possible to affirm the latter of former and by virtue of this peculiarity, the differential predication may be regarded as true though there may actually be no difference between the two."

Although Śrīnivāsācārya, admits Brahman the Highest Reality, to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa, personal God, possessor of a number of auspicious qualities etc., but he does not concede to the doctrine of Viśeṣa as accepted by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa also alludes to the Avatāras or manifestations of God as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Fish, Tortoise and so on. These incarnations are part of him, but these are not to be confused with the individual self which though regarded as 'part' of God, is different in nature, being limited and dependent. An Incarnation can be a manifestation of Lord's powers in entirety as well as in part. The essential form of God is the form of Kṛṣṇa, the Gopa-boy. Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa and Aniruddha, who preside over Ahaṁkāra, Citta, Buddhi and Manas respectively, are also his forms.

The city of Loka or Viṣṇu is called Vaikuṇṭha, Gokūla,



etc.<sup>158</sup> and is endowed with divine attributes which are identical with him.

Śrīnivāsācārya does not go into all these details and alludes to only six vyūhas.<sup>159</sup> Nor does he hold the body and the 'Loka' to be identical with Him.

The second Reality accepted by both is Cit or the individual self. Both agree in holding that the self is eternal<sup>160</sup> and that it is the knower, being of the form of knowledge—

“ज्ञ एवात्मा ज्ञानरूपत्वे सति ज्ञातृस्वरूप एव इति।”<sup>161</sup>

It is also upheld by both the philosophers that the individual self is the agent and its agency is dependent on Brahman. The individual self is the enjoyer of the fruits of its actions. The soul's state of being agent etc. being natural, persists in bondage and release equally.

Both hold that the individual self is a part of God, just as ray is that of the Sun. As the ray is different from the Sun, but at the same time, it is dependent on Him—

‘परेशस्यांशो जीवः’ “अंशुरिवांशुमतः तद्भिन्नस्तदनुयायी तत्सम्बन्धा-  
पेक्षीत्यर्थः।”<sup>162</sup>

Baladeva points out here that by ‘part’ is not meant a piece or part cut off from the whole. It is said to be part in the sense of being dependent and inseparable from him; who is Independent and is its Ruler and supporter.

That the individual self is atomic in size is accepted by both and this atomic nature being natural to it subsists even in the released state.

Both agree on the point that the individual souls are innumerable, each differing from the other due to difference in karmas and sādhanas. There is full agreement on the point of different states of the individual self and its two-fold division into bound and released souls. Baladeva however,

adds a further division of bound souls into two kinds namely those which are desirous of salvation and those which have longing for the worldly objects.

The former type again consists of two kinds of souls *e.g.*—Svaniṣṭha and the Ekāntins. The latter being of two kinds—Pariniṣṭhas and Nirapekṣas. The Svaniṣṭhas are those who meditate on all the forms of the Lord equally, without distinction while the Ekāntins, Pariniṣṭhas and Nirapekṣas are devoted to only one particular form of the Lord Kṛṣṇa in spite of being aware of his innumerable forms. These three are superior to the Svaniṣṭhas.

The third reality accepted by both is Acit. According to both it is evolved out of the Aparā power of Brahman, both accept that the world is as real as Brahman and not illusion or unreal.<sup>163</sup>

Whereas Śrīnivāsācārya mentions three subdivisions of Acit namely Prākṛt, Aprākṛt and Kāla, Baladeva mentions Prākṛt and Kāla only. The characteristics of these two categories are described in almost similar way, by both.

Baladeva speaks of Karma as the fifth category which is described as sentient element and beginningless but which has an end.

Acit is also dependent on Him and different as well as non-different from Him as we would see in the relation of Brahman, Cit and Acit.

Let us first take up the relation between Cit or individual self and Brahman or Viṣṇu. According to both Cit is similar as well as dissimilar to it but how this difference and non-difference is to be reconciled is the point of divergence.

According to Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Jīva is different from God, due to difference in nature. The former is dependent for its existence, maintenance and activities on



Brahman,<sup>164</sup> and are limited, atomic, while the latter is Independent in his activities, unlimited, all pervading Ruler and so on.<sup>165</sup> But the Jīva is non-different from Him, as the effect is from the cause.<sup>166</sup> Moreover as Jīva is pervaded by the Lord<sup>167</sup> in this sense also, it is said to be different from Him. But how does this difference and non-difference co-exist? To this it is replied by Baladeva that the relation is inconceivable or Acintya. It is mystical and beyond the reach of the reasoning of the human mind.

Similarly world, which is insentient, dependent for its existence, maintenance and destruction on Him, is different from God, who is Independent, Ruler, self conscious and so on. But being the product of the power of God, it is different from Him also. Here also as in the case of Jīvas, the relation is mystical.

On the other hand Śrīnivāsācārya holds that this Bhedābheda relation existing between Cit, Acit and Brahman is Svābhāvika or natural, persisting in all states bound as well as released.

Mokṣa or Liberation is the end of this unending circle of birth and death, which is the Prayojana or motive of philosophical pursuits.

According to Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa bondage consists in turning one's face away from Brahman and one is released when one turns one's face towards him.<sup>168</sup>

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa agrees with Śrīnivāsācārya in holding that the realization consists not only in the realization of Brahman but also in the realization of one's own real nature.

Śrīnivāsācārya maintains that on realization one attains similarity to Brahman and same idea is conveyed by Baladeva, when he says that Jīva attains three kinds of union with the Lord on realization namely living in his Loka, getting united

with his eternal form and feeling his existence. At the same time Baladeva points out, that Sāyujya Mukti is the main and all the rest are included in it.<sup>169</sup>

According to both Jīva remains both different as well as non-different from Brahman even in released state. It has no other ruler except Brahman. The individual self is agent, enjoyer and knower. It can roam freely wherever it wants and maintains its individuality in this state.

The individual soul, though similar to the Lord in many aspects, is not capable of creation etc., of which only He is capable. Moreover its size is atomic even in the released state.

Baladeva like Śrīnivāsācārya gives consent to Videha-mukti only. Jīvanmukti is not accepted.

Among the various Sādhana, Baladeva regards Bhakti or devotion to be the only means of realization. By the term Bhakti which is derived from the root 'bhaj' i.e. 'to serve' he understands Prema or intense love and not the sense of devotion. It is similar to the concept of 'bhakti' of Nimbārka<sup>170</sup> and Śrīnivāsa. He points out that Bhakti includes two factors namely Vairāgya (contempt for worldly object) and Prema (strong love for the Lord). Bhakti is not blind but rational, based on knowledge. It is emphasized again and again by Baladeva that by Vidyā and Vidyā alone, one is capable of realising Him. By Vidyā he understands Bhakti preceded by Jñāna or knowledge—

“विद्याशब्देन ज्ञानपूर्विका भक्तिरुच्यते।”<sup>171</sup>

The greatness of Bhakti is pointed again and again. Devotion or Bhakti has been divided into two kinds namely, vidhi-Bhakti and ruci-Bhakti, the former being devotion with fear. Second is superior to vidhi bhakti which is also bound by the scriptures while ruci bhakti is inspired by love for the Lord.



Śrīnivāsācārya however does not give so much importance to Bhakti in Vedānta-Kaustubha although it is regarded as one of the best means. Nimbārkācārya puts a great deal of stress on Bhakti in Daśaślokī. Jñāna-Karma-Samuccaya is not accepted by Baladeva as leading to the liberation.

He agrees with Śrīnivāsācārya on the point that actions or karmas are helpful in purification of the mind and should be performed in accordance to one's varṇa and āśrama.

The grace of the Lord is also regarded as the most significant thing in the realization. Without His grace no one can realize Him. It should be thought however that when the Bhakti is said to be the sole means, why now the grace of God is said to be more significant? It is said so because it is the intense Bhakti alone which leads to the grace of the God. Therefore, Bhakti is rightly said to be the means of liberation.

The grace of the Guru or perceptor is also said to be helpful in His realization but it is not regarded as ultimate, because ultimately it is the grace of the Lord which leads to realization.

Baladeva also speaks of nine modes of devotion, Śravaṇa, *i.e.* listening to the utterance of Lord's name, Kīrtana *i.e.* reciting the name of the Lord. Smaraṇa *i.e.* remembering his name, Pāda-Sevana *i.e.* Serving the Lord, Arcanā *i.e.* his worship, Vandanā *i.e.* bending down before Him, Dāśya *i.e.* treating oneself as His servant, Sakhya *i.e.* treating Him as one's friend and Ātma-Nivedana *i.e.* self-surrender. These nine modes of devotion can be included under either form of devotion *i.e.* Vidhi as well as Ruci Bhakti.

Besides these he refers to many other kinds of Bhaktas and devotions also in details.

As we know Śrīnivāsācārya does not go into these details. Guru śaraṇāpatti is also spoken of by Nimbārka.<sup>172</sup> As is obvious from the study done above, that Śrīnivāsācārya's system has great affinity to the Acintya Bhedābheda, though divergence on some points is also natural from the very fact of existence of two different schools.

### REFERENCES

1. V.K., 1.1.2, p. 13.
2. For details, see Chap. III, p. 44.
3. V.K., 1.1.2, p. 13.
4. Śaṅkarabhāṣya, 2.1.11, p. 561, 1.4.23.
5. Śaṅkarabhāṣya, 2.1.14, p. 566, etc.
6. *Ibid.*
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## CONCLUSION

In India, as in other countries, the philosophical systems, although standing on the grand pedestal of Pramāṇa-trayī, yet, are the outcome of the presuppositions of the philosophers, who interpret all these in accordance to their own concepts and ideas. Same is true of Nimbārka too; who placed an equal emphasis on the two-kinds of statements found in the upaniṣads, one of which propounded abheda or non-difference between Jīva and Brahman, and the other bheda or difference. He accepted both as ultimate and of primary significance and consequently propounded bhedābheda, more precisely Svābhāvika bhedābheda. The fact is supported by Gītā' also in which Lord Kṛṣṇa declares Himself as superior to both kṣara and akṣara, and as their inner controller at the same time. The relation is said to be Svābhāvika i.e. natural, not adventitious (aupādhika) or super-imposed externally but it is natural, intrinsic or inherent and therefore cannot be put aside. This doctrine was carried more forcefully by Śrīnivāsa, as is evident from the study of Vedānta-Kaustubha; wherein, he leaves no stone unturned to bring this fact to the mind of the reader and he has been successful in the achievement of his desired end. A lucid and beautiful treatment has been given by him, which can even be appreciated by a casual reader. The explanation in the work is so convincing that one does not see any impropriety in the co-existence of bheda, and abheda simultaneously. Besides this, the clear cut presentation of the basic concepts in Vedānta-Kaustubha has placed the work to a very high position which perhaps, no other bhāṣya of Nimbārka school can claim.

The concept regarding the relation of the individual self with Brahman, namely, *bhedābheda* is commendable. The self feels identity with Brahman, but its existence as an individual remains, for which the word 'साम्य' (similarity) has been appropriately applied, which again signifies difference and non-difference between the two objects. In my point of view, such conceived state is far better than that of absolute non-dualism, which cannot be easily grasped by people who sometimes equate it also with total non-existence of the self.

Besides accepting *jñāna i.e.* knowledge and *karma i.e.* actions as right course or means to be undertaken, *bhakti*, which according to Śrīnivāsa is 'loving devotion' has been accepted as competent means for this realization.

It is also in consonance to the spirit of Bhagvadgītā, wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that by *bhakti*, one can attain Lord—

“भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः।”<sup>2</sup>

The Ultimate Reality as dealt in Vedānta-Kaustubha is not something abstract but concrete, a Personal God, which can be approached by all and sundry, with love and devotion and *jīva* is the very *aṁśa* or part of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One thing peculiar found in Vedānta-Kaustubha, is its non-allusion to Rādhā, while Nimbāraka always refers to her. For which no specific reason can be given.

Another peculiar thing is that Vedānta-Kaustubha does not criticize any of the Vedāntic Schools. It is appreciable that the work only deals with the doctrine of Nimbāraka School; such *bhāṣyas* are indeed rare; which only take into consideration their own doctrines, without frowning on others here and there.

Comparison of philosophy as contained in Vedānta-Kaustubha with other systems namely that of Śaṅkarācārya,



Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Bhāskarācārya and Caitanya as presented by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, clarifies one fact, that it is not the outcome of a philosophical mind, which is of inferior calibre. Although the system is leaning towards theology also along with philosophical concepts, still it seems to be an improvement on Rāmānuja's concept of ('विशेषण-विशेष्यभावसम्बन्धः Or 'शरीरशरीरीभावसम्बन्धः') regarding cit and acit as mere modes or Prakāras which constitute His body ; and on that of Bhāskara, for whom bhedābheda relation is mere aupādhika and upādhis are also real. The dualism is created in Bhaskar's system by taking upādhis also as real. By accepting the jīvas as gross form of inherent subtle powers of Brahman, which are neither mere modes, nor result of working of upādhis ; Śrīnivāsa has shown himself to be a thinking person ; and has removed the discrepancies, found in the system of Bhāskara and Rāmānuja.

As the date of Śrīnivāsa life has been established in the later part of twelfth century or in the beginning of thirteenth century, the work, Vedānta-Kaustubha must have been written during this period.

The simple language and style of the work is an additional ground for recommendation. The work has a lot to be recommended from the point of philosophy, ethics and originality in treatment as mentioned already. Therefore it may be said without hesitation that the study of the Nimbārka School, without Vedānta-Kaustubha is as incomplete as that of Śaṅkara-bhāṣya without Bhāmatī, or that of Mādhva-bhāṣya without the bhāṣya of Jayatīrtha.

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